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HISTORY OF ENGLAND  
FROM THE DEATH OF EADWARD  
TO THE DEATH OF JOHN

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W. L. R. CATES.



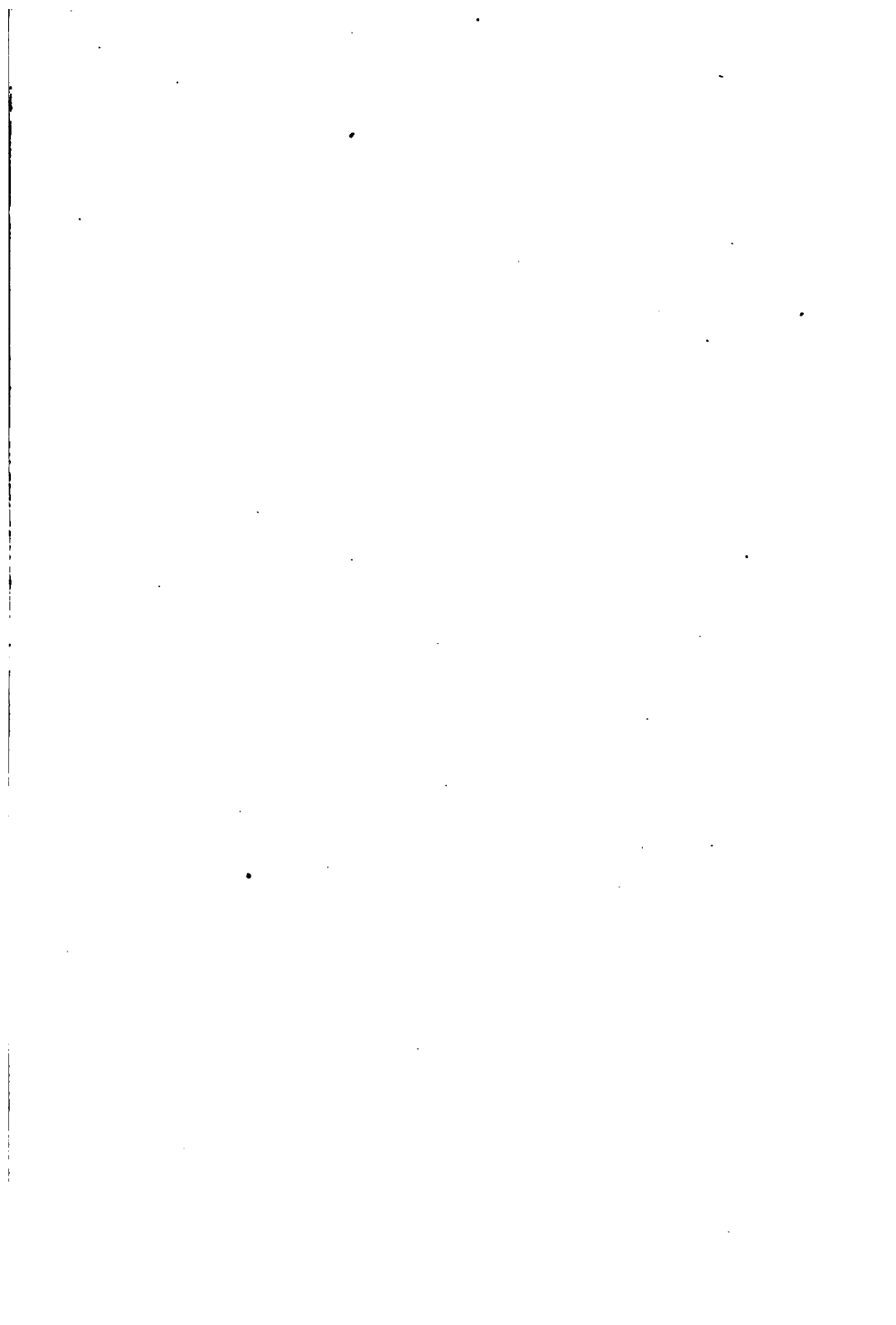
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# HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE DEATH OF EADWARD THE CONFESSOR

TO THE DEATH OF KING JOHN

BY

WILLIAM L. R. CATES

JOINT AUTHOR OF THE 'ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHRONOLOGY'

WITH AN

*INTRODUCTORY SKETCH OF THE PREVIOUS HISTORY*

BY THE

REV. G. W. COX, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'THE HISTORY OF GREECE' ETC.



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# A

## HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND TO THE DEATH OF EADWARD THE CONFESSOR.

THE death of Eadward the Confessor marks no definite period in the history of England; nor are the victory of the Norman Conqueror at Hastings or Senlac, and his subsequent election as King, events differing in kind from many earlier incidents in the annals of the country. The death of the Confessor was followed by the last in a series of changes with which the people had long become familiarised; the death of King John left the work of the Norman conquest achieved, or nearly achieved, in a way of which the Conqueror had probably at best only a vague anticipation. The people whom William of Normandy had kept down under his iron heel rose under Henry III. to a freedom based on the representative government which from that day to this has continued to guard and strengthen in increasing measure the liberties of England.

In one respect, however, of no slight importance, the history of the Norman Conquest stands out in contrast with the history of the times which went before it. It is in a far greater degree a period of contemporary historians, of historians who take very different views of the same events, and who may not be always trustworthy, but from whom we may gain a clear knowledge of the actors in the great drama without the difficulties and perplexities, frequently great, sometimes hopeless, which we encounter in the annals of the reigns preceding the last great conquest of England.

The whole of this history, from the days of the first Teutonic invaders to those of the Norman William, exhibits a series of fierce struggles with short intervals of rest. In no two of these conflicts are precisely the same antagonists ranged against each other, and from almost all of them some new man comes forth as the master. Change of lords became at length so frequent, that the people submitted to it almost as a matter of course. But if everywhere we see signs of weakness, tokens of coming greatness are not wanting. The great fact in the history of this island for the seven

Character of  
English history  
before the Nor-  
man conquest.

B.C. 55. centuries which followed the first inroad of Julius Cæsar is, that imperial Rome failed, and the Teutonic invaders did not fail, to make a permanent impression on the country.

A.D. 409. With the departure of the Roman legions the influence of Rome vanished also, and scarcely a trace remained of Roman law, social life, and civilisation. The Count of the Saxon Shore (Comes Litoris Saxonici) had long been by his official title a witness to the new force which had either already made itself felt in the land, or impressed the Romans and their subjects with a constant sense of impending danger. In the unequal strife which followed the inroads of the German tribes, the religion, the laws, and the language of the British inhabitants were alike swept away, while among the new Teutonic kingdoms one gradually rose to more than equality among the rest, until 800-827. Ecgberht (Egbert) became in some sort the ruler of the whole land.

The fabric of Ecgberht's power was not, indeed, very firmly cemented, but the relations of the over-lord with his dependent

The Empire of  
Britain.

kings seemed to justify the policy which assumed for the English sovereign the titles of imperial dignity. A quarter of a century earlier the Mercian king Offa had

802. corresponded as an equal with the Great Karl (Charlemagne) himself, and the reality of the Roman Empire made it a matter of prudence to claim for the sovereign of Wessex an independence on which even the lord of Rome must not dare to encroach.

The idea of this northern empire was still in shadowy outline, 787-1070. when the land was again troubled by invaders none Danish invasions. the less terrible for their close kindred with the Germanic tribes who had already driven the Britons to the

western mountains. Coming at first as mere marauders, to swoop upon their prey and hurry with it to their ships, the Danes gradually made permanent local settlements, and this second stage was in the end followed by well-defined and settled plans of political conquest. The unity of Ecgberht's empire was at once broken. If after the peace of Wedmore Guthrum <sup>878-890.</sup> and his Danes professed to acknowledge Ælfred as <sup>The kings of Wessex.</sup> their lord, the submission was purely nominal, and Ælfred's local gain as ruler of Wessex was no compensation for the check thus given to the growing feelings of national unity. The brilliant reigns of Eadward and Æthelstan, Eadmund and <sup>901-975.</sup> Eadgar, exhibit in the English chronicle the picture of a dominion in which every chief within the four seas is said to have owned his subjection to the representative of Cerdic.

The picture is probably like that which represents the Egyptian Rameses as the conqueror of Persia, and the Assyrian Semiramis as overrunning Egypt, when the traditions of Persia know nothing of Rameses, and the traditions of Egypt know nothing of Semiramis. After the same fashion the Scottish Grig the Great drives out the Danes, humbles England, and conquers Ireland, and when his conquests are achieved, is anxious only to see that these kingdoms are rightly governed, and that in each the crown shall be placed on the head of the legitimate heir. The Scottish tradition is neither more nor less true than <sup>924.</sup> the English story that the King of Scotland with five <sup>Commendation of the kingdom of Scotland.</sup> other monarchs rowed the barge of King Eadgar on the Dee, and that the whole kingdom of Scotland was in the year 924 solemnly commended, in other words, feudally subjected, to the English King Eadward. The eagerness with which the Northern chief submitted to Eadgar seems to have been soon followed by open enmity; and a seven years' war ended in the not very fruitful victory of Æthelstan at Brunan-<sup>937.</sup> burh. <sup>Battle of Brunanburh.</sup> Things remained much as they were; but later chroniclers or historians found it convenient to avail themselves of the alleged commendation of Scotland to England to justify the claims of Plantagenet Kings to homage said to have been paid to the predecessors of Eadward the Confessor and Harold.

The English empire, seemingly re-established under Eadgar, furnished no permanent bond of union among the people. In



some degree the idea itself was obscured, while Eadwig ruled in  
855.

Wessex and his brother Eadgar was king in Mercia ;  
and the real weakness of the country was conspicuously displayed

860.  
Reign of  
Æthelred.

when the Danish invasions were renewed early in  
the reign of Æthelred. The singular collapse of will  
and energy then shown constitutes one of the greatest difficulties  
in the history of England before the fight at Hastings. At the

991. battle of Maldon, Brihtnoth the ealdorman, and  
Dunnere the churl, displayed the valeur of Homeric heroes : the  
brothers Godric and Godwig made themselves infamous by the  
grossest treachery. But the stars of all traitors were in the as-  
cendant ; and traitors were among the chief counsellors of Æthel-  
red. Henceforth, except in campaigns against his own subjects,  
gold is made to do the work of steel, and the betrayer, coming  
red-handed from the field of iniquity, is received with a welcome  
to which his perjury seems to add only a genial warmth. The  
issue involved the undoing of the work of Ecgberht and of Æthel-  
stan, and the people learnt to pass with increasing readiness  
from an English to a Danish lord or back again from the Dane to  
the Englishman.

But before the massacre of St. Brice had led to the temporary  
overthrow of the English dynasty, Æthelred had become in  
Relations of turns the enemy and the ally of the Norman duke.  
Æthelred with  
Normandy.

The ports of Normandy had offered convenient  
markets to Norwegian ships laden with English plunder ;  
and the complaints which Æthelred naturally made ended in a

991. quarrel which was appeased by the mediation of

1000. Pope John XV. A renewal of the strife was fol-

1002. lowed by an attempted invasion of Normandy ; but  
Æthelred, in some way reconciled to his enemy, became the  
husband of Emma, the daughter of duke Richard the Fearless  
(*sans peur*).

With Emma came a Norman named Hugh, who was at once  
intrusted with the charge of Exeter, and who, of course, allowed

1003. the city to be stormed and plundered. The ravaging

1006. of Wiltshire by the Danes followed next ; and Eadric

Streone, a man who, having been banished for his treacheries,

Career of had returned and was in higher favour than ever,  
Eadric Streone.

led the English forces against them. But he had no  
attention of fighting, and his pretended illness reconciled his men

to inaction. Year after year, the same miserable frauds were successfully repeated, until the whole country was so disorganised that 'no shire would so much as help the other.'

The state of things amongst the Danish invaders was not much better. After the murder of Ælfheah (Al-<sup>1012.</sup> phege), Archbishop of Canterbury, the Danish <sup>Thurkill the Dane.</sup> leader, Thurkill, suddenly went over with a fleet to the service of the English Æthelred. Why he should plight his faith to such a man, why, on Æthelred's death or before it, he should refuse to serve his immeasurably nobler son Eadmund, and go back to his old allegiance, can be explained only on conjecture; and Thurkill was amongst the most respectable of the actors in this woeful time. In the invasion of 1013 Swend was beaten <sup>1013.</sup> off from the walls of London; but he had no sooner returned from a plundering expedition to the West than the men of London yielded, it is said, on the mere threat of the vengeance which would follow their refusal. The English king at once took refuge on board of Thurkill's ships, and found an asylum in Normandy, whither his wife and children had gone before him. The whole country submitted to Swend; but the conqueror lived only a few months, and on his death <sup>The Flight of Æthelred to Normandy.</sup> the English Witan resolved to call back Æthelred, while the Danish seamen offered the crown to Cnut. <sup>1014.</sup>

The experience of the past seems to have taught the English little. The fugitive king was recalled, in the hope that the man who had been thus far governed by liars and traitors <sup>Restoration of Æthelred.</sup> would listen to the counsel of wise men for the future. All that they wanted Æthelred promised, and his promises were eventually in some part fulfilled. But the times were hopelessly out of joint; and Thurkill, who had thus far fought on the side of Æthelred, now took part again with his kinsman Cnut. He was soon followed by Eadric Streone, who at the Gemot at Oxford had added to his former crimes the murder <sup>1015.</sup> of two of the Witan. He thus abandoned the Ætheling Eadmund, and received from Cnut a welcome which argued little for Cnut's insight into human character.

The death of Æthelred rendered another election necessary. All but the Londoners, it is said, elected Cnut: <sup>1016.</sup> the Londoners chose Eadmund. But Eadmund's <sup>Reign of Eadmund Ironside.</sup> strength of character was such that a new life was breathed into

the nation, and men who had trembled at the sight of the Danes now met them in eager anticipation of victory. But the wisdom of Eadmund was not more proof against the treachery of Eadric now than it had been. He still kept that infamous man by his side, and he had his reward. In the thick of the fight at Sherstone, Eadric held up the head of a man whose features resembled those of the king, and urged his men to flee. Eadmund, like William at Hastings, rode to the front and disabused them of their error; but almost immediately after the fight, we see Eadric as high again in his favour as before. Repulsed a third time from the walls of London, Cnut ravaged the lands of Essex, East Anglia, and Mercia. But Eadmund, having at Oxford defeated Cnut's followers on their return, listened again, it is said, to the counsels of Eadric, and left the Danes unmolested in Sheppey. The infatuation of the king may seem marvellous; but the madness spread also to the Danes. Eadric stands as high in the confidence of Cnut as in that of Eadmund. At the battle of Assandun he fights with the English till the Danes give way; then, as if to show that flight is the duty of victors rather than of the vanquished, he draws off all his men by virtue of a compact made with a king who might have preferred to reap the benefit of the bargain somewhat earlier in the day. Nothing daunted by the fearful slaughter, Eadmund was preparing for a seventh battle, when Eadric proposed a conference, which was held at Olney, and in which Cnut agreed to content himself with all England north of the Thames, with the exception of East Anglia, Essex, and London. These, with the rest of the land, remained to Eadmund, 'together with the crown of the whole kingdom,' whatever may be the meaning of these words, which seem to convey some faint notion of imperial dignity.

A few weeks later the body of Eadmund Ironside was laid beside that of Eadgar in the minster of Glastonbury; and rumour charged his death on Eadric. Once again the Witan of England had to make choice of a sovereign, and they chose to put themselves under the Danish conqueror. Eadric, it is said, counselled the slaughter of the two sons of Eadmund; but Cnut sent the children to his brother, who was now reigning in Sweden, with injunctions seemingly that they should be slain; and Olaf, not caring to shed their blood, sent them on to Stephen, king of Hungary. With the

1016.  
Election of  
Cnut as King  
of England.

Ætheling Eadward, the son of Æthelred by his first marriage, Eadric was allowed, it is said, to work his will. By whatever means, Eadward was murdered; and the sons of Æthelred and Emma remained exiles in Normandy. Emma herself returned to share the throne of Cnut, and to become more Danish than the Danes themselves. Executions and banishments removed all whose lineage or influence seemed to threaten danger to the new lord of England, and Cnut at last became conscious that the great traitor of the day might possibly once more prove unfaithful.

So Eadric died, and so ends a tale which in all its particulars cannot possibly be true. A man who had betrayed the English fleet to destruction at Copenhagen or Aboukir would not have been found high in Nelson's trust at <sup>1017.</sup> Death of Eadric Trafalgar; and to the writer who asserted such a fact, the reply would be that his statement was incredible except on the supposition that Nelson was mad, and that the whole nation shared his madness. But this is precisely what we are told about the Witan of Æthelred and Eadmund, not once or twice, but again and again. Suspicion becomes reasonable when we find that treachery is no bar to increased favours at the hands of the very man whom the traitor has betrayed; and when the process is continually repeated, the suspicion becomes overwhelming. We might believe, if there had been no previous treasons, that Eadric, professing to fight on the side of Eadmund at Sherstone, resorted to the device already mentioned in order to break up the English forces; but when we remember that Eadric's treacheries were already legion, we must refuse to believe that within a few days Eadmund had condoned his sins and restored him to his service, unless we believe that Eadmund and his people were all insane.

Under Cnut, who agreed to govern the land according to the laws obeyed by King Eadgar, England enjoyed an unbroken peace for eighteen years. But the rule of a Danish <sup>1017-1035.</sup> Reign of Cnut. King could scarcely foster any special feelings of English nationality, while the real benefits conferred by his wise statesmanship were not likely to increase the reluctance of the people to be governed by a foreign master.

In the contests which followed the death of Cnut, Harold, the reputed son of Cnut and Ælfgifu (Elgiva) of Northamp-

ton, was the candidate of the Danes. Harthacnut, the son of

<sup>1035.</sup>  
Reigns of  
Harthacnut and  
of Harold  
Harefoot. Cnut and the Norman Emma, the candidate of the English, was absent in Denmark. The question was settled, not on the battle field, but by the Witan

assembled at Oxford. Once more it was determined to divide the land, and plausible conjecture is the only ground for the belief that Harold retained the imperial title which Cnut is said to have yielded to Eadmund Ironside. The unity of the kingdom and of the imperial tradition, whatever it may have been, was again practically broken, for the supreme authority lay with the wholly Danish Harold rather than the half Danish Harthacnut. But the people of Wessex chafed under an arrangement which appeared to turn the tables against their old associations. By his prolonged absence in Denmark Harthacnut roused the wrath of his English Witan, who deliberately forsook him and owned Harold as the King of all the land. The deposed King made vigorous preparations for the invasion of England; but while he

<sup>1040.</sup>  
Death of Harold. was still with his mother, who had taken refuge in Flanders, Harold died, and the ready Witan again elected the man whom a few months before they had flung aside.

The second reign of Harthacnut was scarcely less wretched than the first. It is marked by the trial of Godwine, the great Earl of Wessex, the minister and general of Harthacnut, the father of Eadgyth the wife of the Confessor, of Harold who fell at Senlac, of Sweegen; Tostig, Gyrth, and Leofwine. God-

<sup>1036.</sup>  
Death of the  
Ætheling Ælfred. wine had murdered, it was said, the Ætheling Ælfred. His trial ended in his acquittal; but the mystery enshrouding the case has never been unravelled. The great earl

<sup>1041.</sup>  
Godwine at  
Worcester. next appears at Worcester, where the new force of house-carls, the personal troops of the king, the first germs of a standing army, had been attacked by the citizens and slain, while attempting to collect the newly re-imposed Danegelt, a tax now levied on Danes and English alike. Ten years later Godwine confronted the Confessor with a positive refusal to punish before trial the men of Dover charged with insulting Eustace of Boulogne and slaying his followers. The provocation given by these armed tax-gatherers was doubtless not small; but without making any inquiries, Godwine burnt the city and ravaged all the country round it.

The sudden death of Harthacnut 'led all folk' to choose for

their king the Ætheling Eadward, who had only a little while before returned from Normandy to take up his abode in England. The experience of the last half century had imparted not much of practical wisdom to the Witan. The natural preference of a man of English to one of Danish lineage might lead them to fix on the son of Æthelred; but the mere hatred of a Danish king, from disgust at the misgovernment of the sons of Cnut, would be justified only if the long misgovernment of Æthelred had been made a bar to that king's restoration. If, again, the rule of a genuine Englishman was the thing most of all to be desired, not much could be reasonably expected from the election of a man half Norman by birth and wholly Norman by training. The great Earl of Wessex, with his pure and resolute patriotism, had two courses before him. If his love of his country forbade him to bring forward the candidate most likely to be a wise and judicious ruler, he might have determined that the banished children of Eadmund Ironside should be brought back at once to become as English as possible, if the king now chosen should turn out un-English or incompetent, or should leave no son to be chosen in his stead. The danger was not slight. A sojourn of twenty years in Normandy had made Eadward so much of a Norman and a Frenchman as to fill him with an intense dislike of the sound of the English language, and with a thorough distaste for the companionship of those who spoke it. The immediate recall of the Ætheling from Hungary would probably insure during the reign of the Confessor a long sojourn in this country for a prince who, if his tastes should now be foreign, would be a foreigner of a kind not to be regarded with special suspicion and distrust. Every tie which bound England to the Roman emperor and German king was a distinct gain; and if the Ætheling himself should die, his children might before the death of Eadward have reached man's estate, Englishmen in speech, in thought, in education. The foresight of Godwine did not reach so far, and for whatever reason twelve years were allowed to pass before a step was proposed which, if taken earlier, would probably have changed the history both of England and of Normandy. It is of course nothing to the purpose to remark that, according to modern notions, the son of Eadmund, the elder brother, was the real heir, and that the Confessor was the heir of the exile in Hungary.

1042.  
Election of Eadward the Confessor as King of England.

Neither the law nor the custom of England took heed to modern ideas of primogeniture in the election of kings. But it was clearly advisable to guard by every possible means against any further transference of the English crown from kings of one race or nation to those of another; and all the possible, even all the obvious, precautions were not taken.

The Confessor was king; and as time went on, the country was becoming more and more united. The great earls, who first came into being under Cnut, might appear at first sight rather as independent chieftains, and likely founders of independent dynasties; but in point of fact they are ministers of the king—magistrates in short, whose power, as coming from the king and the Witan, is evidence that the whole country was being gradually brought under the dominion of one law. This tendency to union showed itself even in changes which made the way easier for the introduction of a more systematic feudalism by the Norman conqueror. Royal writs, not confirmed by the Gemót of the people, make grants of land which could not all come from the private estates of the sovereign, and show that the Folkland was coming to be regarded as the land of the king.

At the same time Eadward's foreign tastes were working in another direction. English sees were gradually occupied by Norman prelates, who came with feelings of servility to the Roman see altogether beyond the measure congenial to Englishmen. It seems that the patriotic party could do little more to counteract the new influence than to secure some of the sees for churchmen who, as Lotharingians, would be able to speak a Teutonic as well as a Romanic dialect. But the Lotharingians were imbued not less than the Normans with exaggerated notions of papal supremacy which had not yet taken root in England; and the aid thus given to the cause of the Norman conquerors was not inconsiderable.

Such a state of things could not fail to lead to new troubles. Norman after Norman had crossed the sea to exercise power in England, or to eat the fat of the land; and the more developed feudalism, which would draw an impassable line between eorl and ceorl, and regard the idea of equal justice for both as an absurd and impracticable folly, must of itself suffice to exasperate national animosities, and set the court of England against the

country. The court was in fact divided against itself. 1057.  
 The Norman favourites of Eadward found themselves in direct antagonism with his English ministers, and the visit of Eustace of Boulogne served as the spark to kindle the smouldering embers. <sup>Godwine, and Eustace of Boulogne.</sup> The death of one of his followers, who had grossly injured a citizen of Dover, roused the wrath of the Frenchman. To his claim for redress Eadward replied by a prompt order issued to Godwine to inflict on Dover the vengeance which Harthacnut had decreed against the men of Worcester. It may fairly be urged that years had made Godwine wiser, and that he now saw his duty more clearly. He insisted that the men of Dover should first be tried; he might have insisted that a sudden tumult could not possibly justify any sovereign in deliberately treating the people of a whole town or district as foreign enemies. To this demand of Godwine the king replied by summoning a meeting of the Witan at Gloucester, to discuss (strange to say), not the iniquities of the men of Dover, but the misdoings of the house of Godwine. Not content with one acquittal, Godwine expressed his readiness to prove by a second compurgation his innocence of all complicity in the death of the Ætheling Ælfred. Eadward refused to accept it, and Godwine retorted by insisting on the surrender of Eustace and his followers, under threat of war in case of refusal. <sup>Outlawry of the house of Godwine.</sup> This last issue was prevented by the adjournment of the Gemot to London. But no sooner had the Witan assembled in that city than they proceeded at once to renew the outlawry against Swegen, the eldest son of Godwine, who had been banished for the treacherous murder of his cousin Beorn, but who had been shortly afterwards recalled, and restored to his earldom. 1045.  
 No new crime had been committed since his restoration, yet no voice was raised in his defence. It was clear that the English were passing through one of those capricious moods which give to their character at that time the appearance of marvellous fickleness. Alarmed at the treatment of Swegen, Godwine refused to appear unless hostages were given for his safe conduct. The Witan retorted by outlawing him and his whole house. 1051.  
 Godwine, Swegen, and Harold all fled, and Eadward was left alone with his Norman favourites. The acquiescence of Eadgyth in her husband's foreign inclinations failed to save her from being shut up in the nunnery of Wherwell; and William of



Normandy himself had come to spy out the land, in the hope perhaps of so entangling English affairs as to make his own election to the crown not flagrantly improbable. For the present he was to be disappointed.

The people speedily began to regret the loss of the banished earls. The Welsh King Gruffydd passed his borders and har-

1052. Restoration of Godwine and his house. ried English lands, and Godwine, resolved to turn the popular temper to his own advantage, set sail from Flanders, whilst Harold and Leofwine, embarking at Dublin where they had found a refuge, made a descent on the coast of Somerset, and at length joined their father's fleet off Portland. It was not wonderful that the men of the South Saxon coast should take up the cause of Godwine with eager protestations that they would live and die with him ; but the tide had indeed turned, and London was now as strongly in his favour as the last Gemót there had been against him.

Eadward had his house-carls drawn up on the northern bank of the Thames ; but their zeal in his service had waxed cold, and the King's rejection of Godwine's claim for restoration as much disheartened them as it strengthened the resolution of Godwine's supporters. When at length it was known that Eadward had consented to refer the whole question to a Gemót, his Norman favourites felt that it was their turn to fly from the coming wrath. The worst offenders thus passed sentence on themselves. It remained for the Witan to restore the house of Godwine to their honours and

Flight of the Norman priests. possessions, to decree the outlawry of Robert of Jumièges, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his accomplices in the evil work of ' stirring up strife between Earl Godwine and the King, and judging unjust judgement for the people.' In Robert's place, Stigand, Bishop of Worcester, was advanced to the primacy, and another link was added to the twisted chain of pretended wrongs which William was patiently weaving together in Normandy. Years passed before Stigand

1058. could obtain the pallium from Rome ; and when he obtained it, it was from Benedict X., who was afterwards cast aside as an anti-pope and a heretic. The growing ecclesiastical opinion of the day was thus turned against him, and Harold himself was led by it to assume towards his firm political friend an attitude not altogether consistent with high heroic character.

Meanwhile years were passing. Godwine was dead, and

Eadward had no son who could be submitted to the Witan as his successor. Harold became Earl of the West Saxons in his father's place, and his brother Tostig was named ruler of the Northumbrian Earldom on the death of Siward. But the same Gemot which appointed Tostig banished the East Anglian Earl Ælfgar (Algar) for reasons which are barely more than hinted at. Whatever may have been his misdeeds before his sentence, they were certainly surpassed by those which he committed after it. Following the example of Godwine and Harold in resolving to effect a restoration by force of arms, he went beyond them in allying himself with the Welsh King Gruffydd and sacking the city of Hereford. Shrinking from an open conflict with Harold and his army, Gruffydd fled, and Ælfgar on his submission, far from being punished for his treachery, was straightway restored to his earldom. But whatever might be the lot of others, everything tended to raise Harold still higher, and to point him out, after the death of the Ætheling Eadward, son of Eadmund Ironside, which took place in 1057, as the only man whom the English people could wisely choose for their king. Had the Ætheling lived, the whole weight of Harold's ability ought not to have turned the scales in his favour, if for this reason only, that William the Norman could have laid no claim to the crown against the son of Eadmund Ironside.

This, however, might not be. The danger was now becoming imminent; and the memory of the long and wretched minority of Æthelred would alone have sufficed to turn away men's minds from the child Eadgar, even if by the law and custom of England he could urge any title to the crown. The part which Harold had to play in the last years of the Confessor was difficult enough. He had to counter-act the schemes of a man who asserted that Eadward himself had promised to make him his heir, and that Harold in his turn had sworn to do all that might be in his power to secure the succession for him. He had to avoid giving unnecessary offence to the growing ultramontaniam of the clergy and arraying the powers of the Church on the side of a rival who well knew how to turn everything to his purpose. He had further to cherish and strengthen the weak and wavering feelings of English nationality, and to encourage even insular prejudices if these

1053.  
Harold, Earl of  
the West Saxons.  
1055.

Outlawry of  
Ælfgar.

1057.  
Death of the  
Ætheling.

Position of  
Harold.

were not likely to tell against him. His conduct seems to bear some token of these accommodations to his needs and interests. The English people had never shown any special enthusiasm for the discipline and rule of the regular clergy; and thus, while the Confessor was building his monastery at Westminster, both inclination and policy led Harold to establish a body of secular canons, each with his own separate abode, in his great foundation at Waltham. But while he thus showed that the spirit of the foreign ecclesiastics and of their overlord, the Pope, was not his own spirit, he could not summon courage to invite Stigand to consecrate his church, or to place the crown on his head, when the people of England had chosen him to be their king.

The subject of Eadward's alleged promise to the Norman duke, of Harold's oath, and of the Confessor's dying bequests, may be dismissed in a few words. The ascertainable facts in each case lie within a narrow compass; and, constitutionally or morally, they are matters of very little importance. The recommendation of the reigning king weighed much with the Witan; but he could do no more than recommend, and it is abundantly clear that the naming of William by Eadward on his death-bed would have availed little in the present temper of the people. The oath of Harold practically concerns him alone. His contracts, whatever they were, could not bind the English nation; and there is no direct evidence that he entered into any contracts at all. The utmost that can be urged against Harold is the silence of the purely English writers on the subject; and at the best it may be answered that, if they did not believe the story, they could but keep silence while open denial would be dangerous, unless they could muster courage to run the risk. Because no one was hardy enough to do this during the conqueror's life-time, it is almost going too far to assert that their silence warrants even a suspicion against Harold. The story may have some foundation, or it may be a fable as impudent as the legend of the prophecies put into the mouth of the dying Confessor.

What then, was the Norman Conquest? In one aspect, it was simply the last of a long series of Teutonic invasions, stretching back to a time preceding perhaps even the Roman occupation of the country. William of Normandy was but undertaking the task which had been achieved

Events leading  
to the Norman  
Conquest.

by Cnut, and the memory of the great king might go far to reconcile the people once more to a change of masters. The tide of popular opinion had exhibited constant fluctuations, and the different tribes throughout the country were by no means cemented into one compact mass. The Danish population to the north of the Humber was still more willing to live under the rule of Magnus or Swend Estrithsen than to submit to an English sovereign. Yet more, Norman influence had been great once; it might be great again. Harold himself had not insisted on the complete expulsion of the foreigners, and English statesmen had not shown the pertinacity and adhesiveness, the strength of will and fixity of plan, which would make the idea of subjugating them an idle dream. Events had taken place which had brought the rulers of Normandy and England into close connexion; but in a state of things in which almost every king regarded every other kingdom as a legitimate prey if he could only seize and keep it, it was impossible that a fitting opportunity should not present itself sooner or later. The marriage of Æthelred and Emma, their flight to Normandy, the education of their sons at Rouen, the alleged bequest of Eadward and the supposed covenants of Harold, were mere circumstances of which William adroitly availed himself to weaken or neutralise the resistance of the English before the struggle, and to attract to himself the approval and admiration of Europe after it.

## CHAPTER II.

## HAROLD II. (1066.)

1. ON the same day that Eadward the Confessor died (5th Jan. 1066), Harold, second and greatest son of the great Earl Godwine, was proclaimed king. Eadward had carried his monastic virtues so far as to leave no heir to the throne. Eadgar the Ætheling, grandson of Edmund Ironside, stood next as possible claimant, but he was a mere boy and of no great promise, and was therefore passed over. He accepted, instead of the crown of England, the earldom of Oxford. Harold was now in the prime of a vigorous manhood. His age was about 44 or 45. His tall figure, his noble and winning countenance, his great physical strength, his soldierly courage, and his singular capacity as a leader of armies, had long secured to him the affectionate admiration of his countrymen. In addition to his military virtues he possessed civil and moral qualities which were in that rude age far less common. He was remarkable for his practical wisdom in the discussion and management of state affairs, for his eloquence and his power to persuade men, for his gentle-heartedness and his piety, which was of a better than the monastic kind, and for the larger and higher culture of intellect obtained by means of foreign travel and studious observation. But above all, Harold was the son of Godwine, and inheriting his father's great qualities he inherited also his great position as favourite and leader of the English people. All looked to him as their heaven-appointed champion in the struggle which Godwine had long and valiantly maintained against the Norman and French favourites of Eadward, who had at every opportunity intruded themselves into the highest offices of church and state. What Godwine had partially achieved in the subordinate though powerful position of earl of the West Saxons, it might well be hoped that Harold, as king of the English, would completely accomplish.

2. Harold's first appointment as earl of the East Angles took place about the fourth year of Eadward's reign (1045). Seven or eight years later (1053) he had succeeded, on the death of his father, to the dignity of earl of the West Saxons, which virtually carried with it the supremacy of England. He had attained great distinction by his campaigns against the Welsh (1055 and 1063), whom he reduced to submission. He had made the pilgrimage to Rome (1058), and visited the French courts on his way. He had shown his care for the Church, and his interest in education, by rebuilding the minster and founding a secular college at Waltham. In the estimation and love of the people, Harold held an almost royal position long before the death of Eadward, and when that event took place almost all eyes were fixed on him as the only possible next occupant of the throne. The fact that he was not of royal descent may have caused hesitation and perplexity in some minds; for such an election, although fully justified by the law, was a transaction without precedent in their history. But the moment was of supreme importance. The crisis was urgent, and admitted of no delay. The general sense of the impending danger, the certainty of a foreign invasion and of a fierce conflict with the sword for the sovereignty of England, brought home to all minds the sense of the necessity of an able, trusted, and beloved leader. The council of the nation (*Witenagemot*) then sitting at London, immediately resolved to offer the crown to Harold. It was rumoured, and can hardly be doubted, that Eadward on his death-bed had solemnly designated him as his successor, and had given him personally his last directions and requests. Harold accepted the offered crown, and with it, not blindly, the grave responsibilities of the time. He at least knew, if none beside knew, that he was chosen for conflict, not for repose.

3. Nominated by the voice of the dying King, chosen by the Gemót or Parliament which represented the nation, there was yet wanting to make him 'full king' the ceremony, which in those days was more than ceremony, of coronation. The consecration and anointing by the hands of a chief dignitary of the Church, the taking of the customary oath, the solemn prayers, must follow, and follow speedily. The very next day, therefore, it took place. It was the 6th day of January, last of the holy Christmastide. In the early part of the day, the noble West

Minster, which Eadward had founded, and which had only been completed and consecrated about a week earlier, saw the remains of its founder solemnly laid within its walls. Later on the same day, within the same walls, the king-elect stood before the altar, and the crown of Ecgerht and of Ælfred was placed on his head, amidst the hymns and prayers of the Church, and the acclamations of the people. The ceremony was performed, not by Stigand, the primate of all England, who was then under suspension, but by Ealdred, the primate of Northumberland.<sup>1</sup> Before the year closed, Ealdred had to place the same crown on the head of the foreign conqueror, William, Duke of Normandy.

4. The first hint of trouble and resistance followed almost immediately upon the coronation, and it came from Northumberland. That province was chiefly peopled by Danes. Harold left the two northern earldoms, Northumbria and Mercia, under the government of the powerful, ambitious, and treacherous sons of Ælfgar, Morkere and Eadwine. How far either of them may have secretly instigated or sanctioned the hostility to Harold, which now began to show itself, is not known. The bare fact alone is clear that the Northumbrians resolved not to acknowledge Harold as king. It was needful at once to face this danger, and avert by some means the fatal consequences of intestine divisions and civil war. Only a few months previously Harold had counselled Eadward not to suppress by force the revolt of the Northumbrians against the cruel tyranny of his brother Tostig. He had been sent to treat with the insurgents, who had Morkere for their leader. They met him at Northampton; he listened to their demands; attempted in vain to reconcile them to Tostig; then obtained the King's consent to their claims, and thus pacified the province. Tostig was banished, and Morkere received his earldom. The success of his intervention on that occasion could not fail to leave a favourable impression of Harold in the North, and now he might well hope that the rising discontent would yield to the charm of his personal presence. He resolved to go. Associated with him in this courageous and pacific enterprise was his intimate and trusted friend Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester. Of the details of their mission we know nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Stigand is stated by Norman writers to have crowned Harold, but the testimony of English writers is clear and uniform in favour of Ealdred.

But it was completely successful. The high-spirited Northumbrians showed themselves open to the influence of reasonable counsels, and no longer refused submission to Harold as their king. It seems not unlikely that the marriage of Harold with Ealdgyth,<sup>1</sup> the sister of Morkere and Eadwine, took place about this time. It may have taken place a year or two earlier. The king and the bishop, having accomplished their task, returned to London before Easter.

5. Meanwhile vast preparations, diplomatic as well as military, were going on for a war which was to assail him from the south. The tidings of Eadward's death and of Harold's election and coronation reached William at the same time. They were carried to Normandy by an English ship, perhaps by some of the Normans who left or were expelled from England by the new king.<sup>2</sup> The duke was just on the point of starting for the chase. The news made a deep impression on him, and he remained silent for a long time. Then he took counsel with his friend William Fitzosbern, and determined to send an embassy to Harold. He would demand of him the fulfilment of the engagements into which, it was alleged, he had entered with the duke on occasion of his visit to Normandy some time before. Ambassadors brought the message of William to England, but it is impossible to say when he received it. Whatever the precise demands were, and whatever foundation in fact there might be for Harold's obligation, he distinctly refused to comply with them. He insisted that the oath had been taken under compulsion; that the promise, even if freely made, to give to another a crown which was not his was merely null; that the English nation alone could dispose of the English crown, and that he was the freely elected king of that nation. The sword, then, must decide.

6. The enterprise on which William now resolutely entered was one of larger scope and more formidable difficulty than any which had been hitherto undertaken by Norman chieftain or duke. To bring together and organise an adequate body of troops, and to provide the means of transport to the island-

<sup>1</sup> She was the widow of Gruffydd, King of North Wales, whom Harold had defeated and slain in 1056.

<sup>2</sup> English and Norman accounts differ in the most hopeless way as to the course which Harold pursued towards these foreigners. It is certain that some left England; it is equally certain that some remained.



kingdom, were but parts of the task to which he began at once to apply himself. It was necessary that he should in some way indicate to neighbouring princes, and to the public opinion of Europe, his daring intention of seizing the crown of a powerful kingdom against the clearly expressed will of its people. By the advice of his own councillors he summoned a great assembly of all the barons of Normandy. The assembly met at Lillebonne,<sup>1</sup> in a castle recently erected by William. They listened to his own exposition of his project, and to his appeal for their zealous co-operation; and after deliberating in separate groups, came to the conclusion that it was a hopeless venture, and that they would have nothing to do with it. An attempt at once crafty and foolish on the part of William Fitzosbern to change their minds only led to stronger dissent and noisy indignation. The assembly broke up in confusion. But by a separate appeal to each of the members, William gained his end at last, and secured their sanction and promises of service. Embassies were sent to the kings of Germany and Denmark, and negotiations were carried on with the King of France and the Count of Flanders. What the particular results in each case were does not appear. But the fact is clear that volunteers came without hindrance from almost all parts of Western Europe to serve under the Norman banners.

7. The most important of all the embassies sent by William was that to the Pope. It is memorable as the first instance of an appeal to Papal authority on a question of right to a crown. The ambassador was Gilbert of Lisieux. He laid before the consistory a statement of the claims of the Duke, the charges of perjury and of sacrilege against Harold, accused the latter of the murder of young Ælfred, son of Æthelred, thirty years before, complained of the expulsion of Robert of Jumièges from the see of Canterbury, and demanded the sanction of the Pope for the meditated conquest of England. The supreme authority of the Papal Court was at that time in the hands of the famous Hildebrand, originally a monk of Clugny, then archdeacon of the Roman Church, and destined soon to occupy the chair of St. Peter under the title of Gregory the Seventh. He was a man of genius, of resolute spirit and dauntless courage, exemplary in character and

<sup>1</sup> An old Roman town (*Juliobona*) on the north bank of the Seine, once a place of great strength.

life, and wholly devoted to one idea—that of the Papacy as a universal theocracy, invested with full sovereignty over all civil states and princes. The ‘temporal power’ had already established itself in some parts of Italy, and Norman knights had assisted in the subjugation of the cities of the Campagna. Others had obtained territorial settlements, and had consented to receive investiture of their counties and duchies from the Pope. Hildebrand saw and seized the opportunity, and, in spite of vehement opposition in the conclave, had his way. A Bull was issued which declared Harold a usurper, and probably excommunicated him and his adherents. It also authorised William of Normandy to enter England as a conqueror and bring it back to the obedience of the holy see, and to establish there the tax of Saint Peter’s pence. With the Bull was presented a consecrated banner of the Roman Church and a diamond ring enclosing a very precious relic. Thus was the great cause decided after hearing only one side, and the decision was generally accepted as that of a competent tribunal. It put the consecration of religion upon a war of personal ambition, and was in fact, though not in name, a personal crusade against the liberties of England.

8. Harold had begun as early as William to make preparations for the imminent struggle. During the spring he had by extraordinary energy got together such a body of forces, both by land and by sea, as had not been seen in England before. The only standing military force were the *Housecarls*,<sup>1</sup> and they could be reckoned only as the solid nucleus of such an army as was now needed. The *Landfyrð* (militia of the shires) were accustomed to disband after fighting a battle, and the task of keeping a large body of them together for months and feeding them too was one of immense difficulty. Harold nevertheless succeeded in it, and while the land forces kept diligent watch and moved from place to place, the fleet guarded the channel. The fear and agitation of men’s minds at this critical time were immensely heightened by the appearance, in the last week of April, of a great comet. It glared in the heavens for a week, or according to some accounts for a month. It was generally looked upon as a portent of terrible evils about to fall upon the land.

<sup>1</sup> Troops in the personal service of the king. See page 8.

9. Among the military chieftains and adventurers who flocked to the court of Rouen in response to the call of William for volunteers was Tostig, the banished brother of Harold, who had taken refuge at Bruges, at the court of his brother-in-law, the Count of Flanders. He offered his services, eager enough to play a part in a war to be waged against his own countrymen, if only that he might enjoy the gratification of his private resentment against his brother. The duke gave him permission to collect a small naval force, and with it to make a descent on the English coast; and thus the war actually began with the ravages of Tostig on the southern coasts in the month of May. He threatened Sandwich, but the sudden march of Harold from London to its defence saved the town. Tostig, after adding to his armament many of the seamen of the place, sailed away. He next ravaged Lindesey (the country south of the Humber), but being repulsed by Eadwine and Morkere, and then deserted by many of his followers, took refuge with Malcolm, king of Scotland, and passed the summer in that country.

10. At the same time another invasion of England was in preparation. Harold Hardrada,<sup>1</sup> king of Norway, moved by the ambition of conquest, and perhaps also instigated by Tostig, was levying a great army and collecting a fleet, which were ready for departure in August, just when the Norman expedition was also prepared to set out. Early in September, the Norwegian hero, having touched at the Shetland and Orkney Islands, and left his wife and daughters in Orkney, reached the Tyne. Either by design or by chance he was there joined by Tostig with a motley gathering of adventurers from various parts of the British islands. Tostig did homage to him, and 'became his man.' Sailing southward, they ravaged the coasts, burnt Scarborough, and meeting no opposition, entered the Humber, sailed up its tributary the Ouse, and landed within a few miles of York. The danger to which the capital of the north was thus exposed roused the northern earls Eadwine and Morkere to action. They levied a large force, and marched to meet the Norwegians. The battle was fought at Fulford on the 20th September, almost at the gates of York; the English were defeated, and four days later

<sup>1</sup> The story of this hero is the theme of the last fascinating Saga of the 'Heimskringla.' For an account of it see Dasent, 'Jest and Earnest.'

the city surrendered to the victors. Hostages were given on both sides.

11. As soon as the English king heard the news of this unlooked-for invasion, he hastened from the southern coast with his best troops by forced marches to the north. Their route lay along the great Roman road between the northern and southern capitals, and their numbers grew as they went. At Tadcaster, on the river Wharfe, whither the English fleet had withdrawn, they arrived on the 24th of September, the very day of the surrender of York. The next day King Harold entered the city as its deliverer, but without delay or repose he pressed on to meet the foe. It had been agreed that additional hostages for the shire of York should be given to the conquerors, at a place named Stamford-bridge (Stone-ford), on the Derwent, an affluent of the Ouse. It was eight miles from the city. While Harold Hardrada and Tostig with most of their forces lay there, on the gentle sloping ground on both sides of the river, without anticipation of danger, they were surprised by the sudden appearance of a cloud of dust, and then of glittering armour. The host of King Harold was upon them. The English began the battle by an attack on the Norwegians on the right bank, and drove them into and across the river. For some time one heroic Norwegian defended the narrow bridge alone against the advancing English, but they pressed on and passed it, and a severe fight, which lasted all day, took place on the left bank. The King of Norway and Tostig fell, and their brave army was almost destroyed. King Harold had the body of his brother searched for, and honourably buried at York. He also gave peace and friendly dismissal to Olaf, son of Harold Hardrada, who, with the survivors of the host, returned to Norway. Such are the meagre particulars furnished by authentic records of the famous battle of Stamford-bridge, which not only frustrated the expedition of Harold Hardrada, but closed the long series of conflicts on English ground between the English and the Scandinavians.

12. After his great victory Harold remained at York to recover from his fatigues, to refresh his troops, and to secure the spoil. He was attending a banquet on the fourth day after the fight, when a messenger arrived in hot haste from the south, and announced the landing of the Norman army on the coast of Sussex. William had spent eight months in preparation for the

invasion. He had put in requisition all the ships that his duchy could furnish, and these being far short of the number needed, additional vessels were built and presented to him by many of his barons and bishops. His own brother, the Count of Mortaigne, gave a hundred and twenty, the Bishop of Bayeux gave a hundred, and similar offerings on a lesser scale were made by others. The number of vessels altogether is variously stated from about 700 to over 3,000. The number of the troops is left in the same uncertainty, some writers making them 14,000 only, others making them 60,000. The appointed place of rendezvous was the mouth of the small river Dive, which falls into the sea between the Seine and the Orne. There, probably by the middle of August, the fleet had gathered and lay in the shallow estuary, while the troops encamped on the neighbouring hills. William left the government of his duchy in the hands of his wife, Matilda, and hastened to join his army. Adverse winds kept them waiting for a month. Heavy rains caused serious inconvenience; inaction became wearisome and dispiriting to the men; and the risks and perils of the enterprise were the subjects of conversation day by day. Some of the ships were wrecked, and their crews lost in a storm. The great leader himself was not free from uneasiness. The same cause which, at that very time, as some conjecture, compelled Harold to disband his army of defence, was operating in the case of his rivals—the immense difficulty of obtaining supplies for so large a body of men. After a month lost at the Dive, the duke resolved to take up a new position, nearer to the coast of England, and taking advantage of a westerly wind, transported his army to St. Valéry on the Somme, within the duchy of Ponthieu. They took up their new quarters on the 12th September. Still the favouring wind did not blow; and during their new delay, which lasted fifteen days, the efficacy of prayers and ceremonies and a procession of the shrine of St. Valéry was tried by command of the duke. The day after the procession the weather changed, the clouds dispersed, and the south wind blew. It was the 27th of September. Before sunset the embarkation took place, amidst the sounds of music, and the shoutings of multitudes suddenly inspired with a fresh faith, hopefulness, and courage. Every vessel carried a light, that in which William sailed having the most brilliant. He led the van, his flag distinguished by a cross, and the consecrated banner of

the Roman Church floating at the mast-head. In the night this vessel shot far ahead of the fleet, which was scattered over a wide space of sea. Rejoining him the next morning, the fleet passed on to the coast of England. Its natural defenders were far away, repulsing another invasion, and the Normans landed unopposed at Pevensey,<sup>1</sup> in Sussex.

13. The announcement of the landing, made to Harold by a Thegn<sup>2</sup> who witnessed it, was quickly confirmed by another witness, a countryman, who had also later news to tell—that the Normans, after fortifying their position at Pevensey, had marched without delay to Hastings, and had begun to ravage the country round. Harold held a consultation with the chief men of his army, and set out immediately on his march southward. He ordered a general muster at London of all the forces of the kingdom, and quick response was made to his call. From the earldoms of Northumberland and Western Mercia alone men came not. For some reason, perhaps from jealousy and ambitious expectations on the part of Eadwine and Morkere, perhaps from comparative indifference in the people to what might appear to them a mere change in the government of South England which could not much affect them, the men of the northern earldoms held aloof from the muster and the struggle. Harold probably reached London about a week after the landing of the Normans. Besides the Housecarls, he had with him the forces levied on his march, and to these were soon added the men of Kent, Wessex, East Anglia and East Mercia. While awaiting in London the completion of his army, he made a visit to the minster of Waltham, with precious offerings and pious prayers and vows. About the same time it seems likely that messages were interchanged between William and Harold—the former making proposals which could not possibly be accepted. The alleged perjury and sacrilege on the part of Harold, zealously pressed on the attention of the Normans, weighed heavily too on some of his own friends and followers. His brother Gyrth is

<sup>1</sup> The ancient *Anderida*, a famous Roman city, one of the strongest fortresses of the 'Saxon shore.' The storming of Anderida, by Aelle and Cissa, in 491, was the last act of the Saxon conquest of south-eastern England.

<sup>2</sup> A feudal title distinguishing the vassal from his chief (from *th'gnian*, to serve), but not marking his relation to his inferiors, which was that of eorl to ceorl.

said to have dissuaded him from taking part in the battle because of the oath, and would have had him remain behind for the defence of London. Gyrth also counselled him to lay waste the country between Hastings and London, and thus deprive the invaders of necessary supplies. But Harold would not listen to such counsels. His conscience was not troubled about an oath whose special sanctity depended on a mean trick, and he would never consent to harm the folk whom he was set to govern by burning their homes or devastating their lands. Yet this humane shrinking from the prudential infliction of a lesser harm for the sake of avoiding a greater or the greatest possible, was a folly and a blunder of which no really great commander could have been guilty. It is a parallel to the case of a surgeon who should refuse to amputate a finger in order to save a life.

14. On Thursday the 12th of October, then, the march of the English from London towards Hastings began. William had formed an entrenched camp there, probably on the top of the hill on which the castle was afterwards built, the ruins of which still remain. His policy was not to leave the coast or cut himself off from safe retreat in case of the worst. By ravaging the country he sought to compel the English to fight soon, and to draw them to the extensive level tract near the coast, where his cavalry could act with the greatest advantage. Harold, on the other hand, was resolved to take a defensive attitude, and on ground of his own choosing to await the attack of the enemy. Each got information of the other's forces and dispositions by means of spies. The spot which Harold selected for his camp was about seven miles north-west of Hastings. Its ancient name was Senlac.<sup>1</sup> It is a low hill at the southern extremity of the lofty downs once forest-covered, with slopes of various degrees of steepness, and a small detached hill rising in front of the southern slope. It commanded the road from Hastings to London, and all the rough irregular ground stretching from its foot to the sea. The position, of great strength by nature, Harold fortified still further by constructing palisades along the south-eastern edge, with three openings, and a ditch. There, within somewhat narrow bounds, he posted his army in one very compact mass. In the centre waved the national flag of the

<sup>1</sup> The etymology of this word is unascertained. It is hardly likely to be an equivalent of *Sanguelac*, lake of blood.

English, bearing on its folds the Dragon of Wessex; and beside it was placed the standard of the Fighting Man, the personal banner of the king. There stood Harold with his brothers Gyrth and Leofwine; around them the noblest and bravest of their thegns, and the trusted housecarls; and beyond these, to the right and left, the light-armed levies; every man on foot. The newly levied men were variously, some of them even rudely armed, and wore no defensive armour. The housecarls had helmets, coats of mail and shields for defence, and most of them were armed with the heavy battleaxe which had not long been in use. Their strength lay in close array behind, first, their wooden palisades, and then the impenetrable wall formed by their kite-shaped shields.

15. The battle was to be fought on Saturday, the 14th of October. The Normans, who had been zealously taught to look on the invasion as a religious war, are said to have passed the preceding night in acts of devotion. The English spent it, we are told, in singing and drinking. But this contrast is presented to us by the pens of the conquerors. Early in the morning of Saturday the Normans were astir preparing for their march and the great conflict. William heard mass, addressed his soldiers, reciting again to them his claims and vindicating the war, and then the march began. First coming in sight of the English position when they reached the opposite hills of Telham, the duke there solemnly vowed that if God should give him the victory he would erect a monastery on the hill of Senlac. On the heights immediately facing that hill the Norman army was drawn up in three divisions. In the centre were the cavalry, commanded by William in person. He was mounted on his Spanish charger, bore an iron mace, and wore hung round his neck the most revered of the relics on which Harold, it was said, had sworn. Beside him floated the consecrated banner of the Pope, borne by Toustain the White, an honour declined by two Normans of higher rank, and with him rode his brothers Robert of Mortaigne, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. The left division was composed of the men of Bretagne, Maine, and Poitou, under the command of Alan of Bretagne; the right, consisting of the Frenchmen and other mercenaries, was commanded by Roger of Montgomery. In each division the archers, crossbowmen, and other light-armed troops, were placed in the front rank; behind



them the heavy-armed foot, and hindmost, the cavalry. The two latter classes were defensive armour similar to that of the English—the helmet, the coat of mail, and the shield; the horsemen carried lances and heavy swords.

16. When the enemy were seen approaching over the irregular ground about Telham, Harold addressed his army, and then dismounting by the standard, uttered a prayer for divine aid. Presently there was a flight of arrows from the Norman archers, and riding forward alone came Taillefer, skilled in song and in sleight of hand. He sang the inspiring song of Charles the Great and Roland, famous through all Gaul, and at the same time tossed up and caught his sword in graceful play. He slew two of the English, and was immediately slain by their comrades. The heavy-armed foot made their way up the hill, and attempted to break through the palisade. The fight was fierce, but the English axes were too heavy for them. The infantry fell back, and the horsemen advanced, but their stormy onset could not penetrate those hard-set walls. First turned and fled the men of Bretagne and Maine. A body of English, against orders, went in pursuit of them. The whole Norman army was soon in disorder, and a rumour passed among them that their leader had fallen. But they were presently rallied, and reassured by the voice of William in person. The fugitives turned on their pursuers and cut them to pieces. Not one of the English escaped. In a second attack William and his brothers led the cavalry, making straight for Harold's position. William's horse was killed under him by a spear from the hand of Gyrth. Fighting then on foot he met Gyrth, and with a blow of his mace killed him. Leofwine fell at the same time by some unknown hand. The fight continued at the barricade and William had a second horse killed. But although breaches had been made in the palisade, and the brothers of Harold had fallen, the assailants were again driven back. In order to draw the English from their strong position, and thus lay it more open to attack, the duke gave orders for a portion of his army to make a feigned flight, and when they should be pursued to turn on the English, thus repeating by design what had occurred by chance earlier in the day. The stratagem was successful, but the English fought so stoutly that the Frenchmen were almost all slain. The hill was now exposed, and the enemy passing the palisade dashed against the wall of shields, which re-

mained still impregnable. Evening was coming on, and the conflict was still maintained. Something was wanting to bring it to a decisive issue. At last, by command of the duke, the archers shot upwards into the air, that the arrows might do more terrible execution by their fall than they could by their ordinary flight. Shield and helmet were but a poor defence against these falling shafts. Numbers fell, blinded, disabled, dead. One arrow of these fatal volleys entered the right eye of Harold; the axe dropped from his hands, and he fell to rise no more. Twenty Norman knights vowed to capture the English standards, and did so, at the cost of the lives of most of them. The dying king was savagely assailed and despatched, and brutal insults were done to his remains by four knights. One of these men was afterwards punished by William by expulsion from the army. The personal followers of the king fought on, and were all slain. As darkness fell over the scene the English army broke up and fled; many Normans pursuing them were slain. The duke, pressing towards the place of this last resistance,<sup>1</sup> met Eustace of Boulogne retreating with fifty knights. Eustace whispered to him a warning not to go further, and as he spoke he received from some unseen arm a blow on the back, and was carried away bleeding and insensible. William then took part in the latest struggle, and repulsed the last obstinate assaults of the English.

17. Such are the principal details of the battle of Senlac, as gathered and sifted from the strangely conflicting narratives of contemporary writers. It was decisive, for no second battle had to be fought. It was the greatest, though not the final and completing act, in the process of the Norman conquest of England. The leaders on both sides were supported by admirable courage and intelligent obedience on the part of their respective forces. The slaughter was terrible. The English nobility, at least of the southern and eastern portions of the kingdom, perished in the fight; and William found, when the muster-roll prepared at Saint-Valéry was called over, that he had lost, besides a large number of his knights and nobles, a fourth part of his army. But the English had lost their chosen king, and for want of a leader the national army disappeared. William was master of a fourth part of England, and the fences were broken down and the way was open for the conquest of the whole.

<sup>1</sup> Long afterwards known by the name of *Malfosse*.

18. The night which followed the battle found the victors in possession of the place of slaughter. The banner of the duke floated over Senlac; and amidst the masses of dead and dying men of both nations William and his soldiers rested, refreshed themselves, and gave thanks. The next day the burial of the dead was undertaken. English wives and mothers were permitted to search for and take away the remains of their beloved ones. But to the Norman soldiers were assigned the spoils of the dead foemen. Among the bodies were found thirteen with the monastic dress. These were Ælfric, abbot of Hyde, and twelve of his monks, who had volunteered their services in defence of their country. The body of Harold lay long undiscovered. His wife Eadgyth was far from the scene; she had fled for safety to the North. Two canons of Waltham, who had anxiously watched the fight, and perhaps with them the mother of Harold, the aged Gytha, begged the body of the hero, offering its weight in gold. But it was refused. The conqueror's will was that it should have no holier tomb than a pile of stones on the shore. Search was made for the body, long in vain. At last it was recognised by the keen eye of the loving Eadgyth, the "lady with the swan's neck," once the beloved mistress of Harold; and then it was borne, honourably though by the hands of the foreigners, to the camp on Hastings hill. It is related, and there is much to confirm the story, that the body of Harold was not long after removed to his minster at Waltham.

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NOTE. *The Bayeux Tapestry.*

This remarkable work, a roll of linen cloth, 20 inches wide and 214 feet long, is one of the most important authorities for the incidents narrated in the above chapter. It is worked in coloured woollen thread, and has a curious border, representing chiefly figures of animals and scenes from Æsop's fables. It includes pictures of the whole series of events in the Norman conquest, from the setting out of Harold, on his visit to Normandy in 1065, to the defeat of the English at Senlac. The subject of each of its seventy-two compartments is indicated by a legend. Public attention was first called to this work in 1724, and an engraved copy was published in 1730. It narrowly escaped destruction at the hands of the revolutionary party, and was afterwards carried off to Paris by order of Napoleon I., and exhibited in the Louvre. It was, however, restored to Bayeux, and is now exhibited there under glass in the Public Library. Its

original place was the cathedral of Bayeux, to which it was probably presented by Bishop Odo, who took so distinguished a part in the events which it commemorates. Its execution was traditionally assigned to Matilda, wife of the Conqueror. [For a detailed account of the tapestry, see article in the Arts and Science Division of the *English Cyclopædia*. And for a more recent critical estimate, Freeman's *Hist. Norm. Cong.* vol. iii. App. A.]

## CHAPTER III.

## WILLIAM I. (1066-1069.)

1. A BRIEF interregnum followed the overthrow of the English monarchy at Senlac. The day after the victory William returned to his camp at Hastings, where reinforcements from Normandy had meanwhile arrived. In anticipation that some of the English would hasten to make submission to him, he waited there nearly a week. But no one at present was inclined to submit. On the 20th October, therefore, he set out from Hastings and marched eastward along the coast, ravaging the country as he went. At Romney, then a famous seaport, he took fearful vengeance for the defeat and slaughter of a party of Normans by the bold inhabitants of the town. The next day he appeared before Dover, which, notwithstanding its strong fortress on the hill, surrendered without resistance. Against his orders part of the town was set on fire and plundered by his men, but he made good the damage to the inhabitants. In the castle, which he strengthened, were placed the numerous sick soldiers of his army. After eight days' stay at Dover he left the coast and directed his march towards Canterbury. The city sent an embassy to meet him on the way, bringing hostages and tribute, and professions of submission. The rest of Kent soon followed this example. At the end of October the Norman camp was formed near Canterbury and, the duke falling seriously ill, no further advance was made for a month. An embassy, however, was during that time sent to Winchester, the former capital of the West Saxon kingdom, and then the home of Eadgyth, widow of the Confessor. The lady and the townsmen sent their submission, with fitting presents, to the conqueror.

2. London showed a less timid temper. It had grown recently into greater importance than ever, and had been more regularly the seat of royalty both under Eadward and under Harold. It had well-nigh attained the dignity of the national capital, and

now strong by its position and its walls, stronger by the stout hearts of its citizens, it was rapidly put into a state of defence. Preparations were made to fight again, and the Witan met to elect a new king. Amidst a conflict of claims and intrigues it was no easy task to make a choice which should be really national. The earls Eadwine and Morkere were forward in their ambitious pretensions, but without success. Harold's brothers had fallen with him, and his sons were young and almost unknown. The choice of the Witan fell on the Ætheling Eadgar, grandson of Eadmund Ironside, and last surviving male of the line of Cerdic. His royal descent seems to have been his only recommendation. The prelates Stigand and Ealdred, and the two northern earls, concurred in the election, but some of the prelates are said to have opposed it. Eadgar, however, does not appear to have been crowned, nor to have exercised the royal authority in more than one or two instances. There was no magic in his name to heal the wounds and close the sad divisions of his country; nor was it long before it was seen that the resistance purposed, and to some extent prepared, was impossible. The two powerful earls who had undertaken the conduct of the military measures again played false to their countrymen, and withdrew with all their forces to their earldoms.

3. Thus betrayed, weakened by divisions, depressed and discouraged, the men of London heard at the beginning of December that William had broken up his camp near Canterbury, and was marching on their city. He did not, however, formally attack it at that time. A body of his cavalry reached Southwark, had a short conflict with the citizens, and burnt that suburb. He then continued his march along the south bank of the Thames, desolating the country as he went, till he reached Wallingford, and by the bridge there passed unopposed to the north bank. At Wallingford, according to some authorities, Stigand, the primate, presented himself to William, swore fealty to him and was flatteringly received.<sup>1</sup> The progress of the army continued as far as Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire; the band of devastation extending itself and threatening to surround London completely. An assembly of the citizens was called by Esegar, the

<sup>1</sup> Other authorities place the submission of Stigand a little later, at the Berkhamstead gathering.

Staller,<sup>1</sup> the Sheriff of the Middle-Saxons, and the decision was come to unanimously to transfer their allegiance from Eadgar to William. An embassy of leading men, with Eadgar at their head, and among them Ealdred, Archbishop of York, the Bishops of Worcester and Hereford, possibly the earls Eadwine and Morkere, was sent to Berkhamstead. There they took the oath of allegiance to the Norman conqueror, gave hostages, and offered to him the crown of England. William would not too eagerly grasp at the gift, but after formal deliberation with his chief men he accepted it, and the coronation was fixed for Christmas, then close at hand.

4. Notwithstanding this act of submission and the oaths of the leading men, William naturally distrusted the hostile spirit of the Londoners, and took the precaution before entering the city of having a temporary fortress constructed in which he might dwell safely. Out of this grew in course of time the stately Tower. The king-elect then marched to London, and on Christmas morning entered the great Abbey Church in a procession of nobles and prelates, amidst the shouts of his new subjects, to receive the crown of England at the hands of the primate Ealdred. The question whether they were willing to receive William for their king was put first in English and then in French, and the response of English and Normans was made with acclamations at the same moment. The unusual noise was immediately followed by a tumult outside the church. The Norman troops who had been stationed in its precincts set fire to the neighbouring houses, and in the confusion began plundering the city. The crowd within the church rushed out, and none were left there but William and the officiating prelates and clergy. The customary observances, however, went on, the crown was placed on the royal head, and the usual oaths of the English kings were taken. To them was added a special oath, that William would govern as justly as the best of the kings who had ruled before him. The title which was won by the sword at Senlac, and had been formally acknowledged at Berkhamstead, was now finally complete by the consecration at Westminster. The interregnum was closed, and William, Duke of Normandy, was also King of the English.

5. Although the title of the new king was now formally perfect, his actual sovereignty extended over a very small part of

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Standard-bearer of the kingdom.

the kingdom. He was master of the southern and eastern districts, which had been included in the earldoms of East Anglia and Wessex : but the west and the north remained independent, and would have to be reduced to submission by the sternest measures. At present the policy of the conqueror was to be clement and conciliatory. He would win the liking or the acquiescence of his new subjects by a show, at least, of humane considerateness. The riot and pillage at the coronation were caused probably by the mere wilfulness and greed of his soldiery. He immediately admonished his barons of the danger of oppressive and violent acts, and published stringent rules for regulating the discipline of the army, and for preventing pillage, extortion, drunkenness, and insults to women. Very soon after his coronation he quitted London, anxious, perhaps, not to expose himself too much to possible dangers from the high spirit, distrust, and audacity of the citizens, and retired to Barking, in Essex. His fortress in London was not yet strong enough for security or defiance. While at Barking, the two northern earls Eadwine and Morkere presented themselves and made submission. Many others did the same, and all were received with a politic graciousness. Flattering attentions were especially lavished on the feeble Eadgar, from whom little was to be feared. The city of London was gratified by a charter confirming its ancient rights, possessions and privileges.<sup>1</sup> From Barking the King made a progress through some of the districts actually subject to him, winning, it is said, golden opinions by his acts of clemency and generosity, and at the same time probably making arrangements about the disposal of the forfeited lands.

6. One of the largest consequences of the Norman conquest was the transfer of lands which took place from English owners to the Normans. It was a consequence which became in turn a cause of other and more enduring consequences. This stupendous confiscation was, like the Conquest itself, not a sudden act, but a slow and gradual process. It does not appear to have been resisted, but submitted to as a necessity and as a fate which was to be expected under the circumstances. That William was the legal successor to Eadward, that Harold son of Godwine was a mere usurper, that all who had in fact or in intention supported him against William were guilty of treason, and had thereby

<sup>1</sup> The original is still preserved in the City archives,



forfeited their lands and goods to the king,—these were the current fictions of law in the light of which the men of both nations were trained to look at and judge of the change. The process began in the first weeks of William's reign, and the first estates appropriated were those of Harold and his family, and of all those who had fought on his side at Senlac. In Kent, Sussex, and Berkshire, hardly an Englishman was left in possession of an estate. Commissioners were appointed to make rigorous inquiry and carry out the necessary arrangements. Thus in course of years not only all the great estates, but all the chief dignities and offices, civil and ecclesiastical, had passed into Norman hands. William had tempted his followers by large promises, and he did not fail to fulfil them, at the cost of Englishmen. In some few instances Englishmen seem to have retained possession of their estates, in other instances they obtained a regrant of the whole or of some part of them from the king. Norman barons with their bands of retainers formed a garrison for the maintenance of the new power wherever they were settled. The grasp of the conquerors was further tightened by the building of castles in the most important towns and districts. Among the earliest of these hateful and hated fortresses were those at Hastings, Dover, London and Norwich. As the tide of conquest advanced over successive districts new castles were reared, till the land was well-nigh covered with them.

7. In the early spring of 1067 William resolved to visit his duchy. As co-regents in England during his absence, he appointed his trusted friend and adviser William Fitzosbern, the chief promoter of the conquest, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, his half-brother, who had so powerfully contributed to the success of the enterprise. These two chiefs were named on the ground of their being favourites of all Normans, and well appreciated by the English. The appreciation of the latter was to be rudely shaken by the experience of their rule. They were both made earls, but instead of investing them with the dominion of such vast territories as had formed the great English earldoms, William made Odo Earl of Kent, and Fitzosbern Earl of Hereford. To the latter was assigned the care of the turbulent north. Other chiefs were intrusted with more limited and subordinate commands. The earldom of northern Northumberland, over which William had as yet no power, was conferred on

Copsige,<sup>1</sup> who had once ruled there as Tostig's deputy. Before the end of March, and within three months of his coronation, William embarked for Normandy. He sailed from Pevensey, the place at which he had landed. A large number of Englishmen were present to witness his departure, and some of the leading men were commanded to accompany him. Among these were Eadgar the Ætheling, the earls Eadwine, Morkere and Waltheof,<sup>2</sup> and the primate Stigand. Their removal would lessen the chances of disturbance and revolt during his absence. At Pevensey the Norman soldiers were gratified by rich gifts, portions of the wealth of the conquered country. The conqueror carried with him immense treasure in gold and silver, coin, sacred vessels, and costly works of embroidery for which English women were celebrated. His countrymen in Normandy welcomed him with enthusiasm, and his progress from the sea to Rouen was a triumphal procession. Prominent in this display were the clergy and the monks. They saw in William the Church's champion, the victorious leader in a war made sacred by the sanction of the Pope; and also the bringer of gifts and treasures for Rome and for many churches of Normandy and of Gaul. To the Pope was presented, with vast store of wealth, the ensign of the fallen Harold, the banner of the Fighting Man. William kept the Easter festival at Fécamp. Occupied with various duties of legislation and ecclesiastical arrangements during the summer and autumn, he remained in the duchy till December.

8. Troubles which had arisen, and greater troubles which were threatening to arise in England, made William's return necessary. His deputies Odo and Fitzosbern, in their relations with the English, had not adhered to his policy of conciliation. They had not maintained discipline among their troops, nor made themselves a terror to evil doers. The natural bitterness of subjugation was intensified by the arrogance and contempt of the governors, the licence and violence of the soldiery, and the impossibility of obtaining a fair hearing of complaints or just redress for wrongs. The tyrannical policy of the regents set an example which was readily followed by men in subordinate positions, and a state of irritation was caused which might

<sup>1</sup> Also named Copsi, and by the Normans Coxo.

<sup>2</sup> Son of the great Siward, Earl of Northumberland.

have been turned to account by an able and trusted leader. But there was no such man. Those who might have naturally put themselves at the head of a popular rising were absent with William. The irritation therefore, though widespread, could only show itself in local and disconnected outbreaks. The people were not united. Many preferred selfish ease and prosperity to the effort and cost of a struggle, and even took part with the Normans in suppressing the resistance of their countrymen. The first serious breach of the peace was in Northumberland. Copsige, appointed by William to the earldom, succeeded in getting possession and expelling the former Earl Oswulf. But within a few weeks Oswulf, with an armed band, came suddenly upon his rival while feasting at Newburn. The latter escaped to the church, the church was set on fire, and Copsige was slain. Oswulf recovered his earldom for a short time. In the earldom of Hereford the Norman power was defied by one Eadric, surnamed the Wild, or the Forester, who was said to be a nephew or grandson of the infamous Eadric Streona. His estates lay partly in Herefordshire, partly in Shropshire. The inroads of the Norman garrisons of the earldom were again and again repulsed. Aided by two Welsh princes, Eadric overran and pillaged the country as far as the river Lugg,<sup>1</sup> and reduced the garrison of Hereford to distress. In Kent oppression and insult drove men to a madder course. The insurgents sent over to invite the notorious Eustace of Boulogne to come to their help, and lead them to the siege of Dover castle. A time was chosen when the fortress was left less strongly guarded than usual; both Odo the Regent and Hugh of Montfort, the governor of the castle, being absent. The attack was skilfully planned and vigorously maintained for some hours; but the men of Dover, who had not forgotten the slaughter in their streets of sixteen years before, took part with the garrison. Eustace and his followers were routed; and being pursued by the cavalry, his men were cut to pieces, captured or dispersed, Eustace himself escaping by swifter flight to his ship.

9. These attempts were merely local and casual, and could have little influence on the general course of events. But the discontent and impatience of the people began to show itself

<sup>1</sup> On which Leominster stands.

in other ways. Many, hopeless of relief, left their own land to find temporary shelter or a permanent home elsewhere. English exiles were seen in almost all parts of Europe.<sup>1</sup> The thoughts of men were turning towards foreign alliances and intervention. Endeavours were especially made to induce Swend, King of Denmark, to come to their aid. He was not only the political ally of England, but was closely related to the family of Godwine. His intervention would be welcome alike to Englishmen and to the Danish population of Northumberland. Swend listened to the urgent requests of the exiles, and was willing to comply with them. But he delayed his expedition, and when it was sent it was too late for success. The report of this project was the gravest news that reached William from his new kingdom during his stay in Normandy. He felt it necessary at once to return to England. Having appointed his wife Matilda and his eldest son Robert, then a young boy, regents in the duchy, he sailed in the first week of December for England. He kept the Christmas festival at Westminster, held the usual *Gemót*, and received with studied courtesy the bishops and thegns who waited on him. At the same time, on the ground of the recent revolts, he made a new confiscation of estates on a vast scale, and imposed a grievous tax on the people. To ascertain the intentions of Swend, and if possible avert the projected invasion, he sent an embassy to Denmark. For this mission he selected an Englishman, Æthelsige, Abbot of St. Augustine's, who had stood high in favour both with Eadward and with Harold. We possess no information about the details of his negotiations, but Swend's delay in carrying out his plan may have been partly due to the influence of Æthelsige. For the same purpose the influence of Adalbert, archbishop of Bremen, was by William's desire brought to bear on Swend. The danger of invasion being for the time averted, William could apply all his energies to the establishment and extension of his sovereignty in England.

10. And first, the patriotic movement which had begun in the western shires demanded attention. Exeter, the most important

<sup>1</sup> A large body of them sailed to the Mediterranean, and entered the service of Alexius, Emperor of the East. They fought in the campaigns against the Normans of Italy, and their descendants formed part of the Imperial body-guard (the *Varangians*) for several generations. They distinguished themselves in the defence of Constantinople against the Crusaders in the thirteenth century.

city of the west, was still independent. It had not acknowledged William as king, and its citizens had injured and insulted a party of Norman soldiers who had been driven by a storm up the river. Having thus exposed themselves to the vengeance of the conqueror, they zealously prepared for defence. The strong walls of the city, with their towers, were made stronger by additional works, and the neighbouring towns and shires were called on to give their aid. A special significance was attached to this movement, because great estates belonging to the family of Godwine and Harold lay in Devonshire and Somersetshire. Exeter was also at this time the home of Gytha, Harold's mother, and perhaps of his sons also. The call for volunteers in aid of the purposed resistance was liberally answered, chiefly from the west. The north held aloof. William's first step was to send an embassy to Exeter, demanding the oath of allegiance from the townsmen, and at the same time admission for himself and perhaps for a garrison within the walls. The answer of the leading men was a refusal to take the oath or admit the king, coupled with an offer to pay such tribute as they had been accustomed to pay to other kings. William was not the man to be satisfied with such a reply. He therefore marched without delay against the city, harrying the country as he went, and destroying the towns. On this occasion it is noted that for the first time his army consisted partly of Englishmen. The ruthless severity of his policy as a general inspired terror at least in the wealthy citizens, and a deputation offering full submission, and bringing hostages, met him when he was within a few miles of the city. But when he came near and would have entered, the walls were fully manned and the gates were shut against him. He then formed the siege, and to intimidate the inhabitants he had one of the hostages deprived of his eyes in the presence of the two armies. But this infuriated instead of disheartening the defenders, and for nearly three weeks they held out against incessant attacks. When at last they saw part of their walls undermined and breached, they submitted unconditionally, and obtained full pardon and security for their lives and goods. Before William entered the city, Gytha with many of her friends had made their escape by the river. They found a refuge for a time in a small island in the Bristol Channel, and afterwards at St. Omer. The fall of Exeter was immediately followed by

the foundation of a castle on a commanding site, a victorious march into Cornwall, and the commencement of a new series of confiscations and distribution of the conquered lands. Thus William made his kingship a reality in the west. The winter campaign had lasted less than three months (January to March), and the conqueror kept the festival of Easter at Winchester. At the following Whitsuntide the Duchess Matilda, who had just come to England, was crowned Queen by Ealdred at Westminster.

11. The calm which succeeded the suppression of the western revolt was very soon broken by a formidable rising in the north. If not instigated, it was certainly supported by the earls Eadwine and Morkere, who though they had made a politic submission to William must have been weary and impatient of their constrained attendance at his court, and may still have had hopes of regaining something of their former importance and authority. William had promised Eadwine one of his daughters in marriage, and his refusal to fulfil this promise determined the earls to leave the court and return to their earldoms. They were well received by all classes, and the movement for independence grew rapidly. Eadgar the Ætheling, Gospatric—to whom had been given the earldom of Bernicia after the death of Copsige—Maerlswegen, sheriff of Lincolnshire, who had been left in command in the north after the battle of Stamfordbridge—and Archil, a powerful Northumbrian, were also prominent leaders. Malcolm of Scotland promised his assistance, but did not give it. The citizens of York, notwithstanding the dissuasions of Ealdred, joined zealously in the movement. It was the summer of 1068. William marched to the north, founding castles on his way at Warwick and Nottingham,<sup>1</sup> and on his return at Lincoln, Huntingdon and Cambridge. The movement collapsed through the cowardice or treachery of Eadwine and Morkere, who met William on his march, submitted and were received, nominally, into favour again. Their forces dispersed, Eadgar with his mother and sisters,<sup>2</sup> the earl Gospatric and the sheriff Maerlswegen, took refuge at the

<sup>1</sup> Oxford is also said to have been stormed on this occasion, but on questionable authority. That it was besieged and destroyed at some time appears certain, but the date is not ascertained.

<sup>2</sup> They had embarked for Hungary, but were driven by a storm on to the coast of Scotland.

court of Malcolm; others retired to Durham, and prepared there for another struggle. York submitted and gave hostages, and a castle was built there. William also received the submission of Archil and of Æthelwine, the bishop of Durham. Through the mediation of the latter, Malcolm also made his peace and swore fealty to William. During this summer a foolish and futile attempt was made by the sons of Harold, who had taken refuge with Diarmid, King of Leinster. They sailed with a small fleet up the Bristol Channel, ravaging the coasts as they went, made an attack on Bristol which was repulsed by the townsmen, fought in Somersetshire with Eadnoth,<sup>1</sup> who was killed, and after further ravages in the west returned to Ireland.

12. The following year (1069) was perhaps the busiest and most eventful of William's reign, and was certainly one which brought the most fearful disasters on the English people. Beneath a tranquil surface the spirit of resistance was still at work. The land was full of wretchedness, deeds of violence were common, and following in the track of war came famine and pestilence. The furthest districts of northern England had yet to be subjugated. Large numbers of men in those parts, to escape the rule of the Norman, left the towns and lived in the wild glens and woods, sustaining themselves by pillage. The Normans called them savages, (*silvatici, sauvages*). In January the earldom of Northumberland, vacant since the retirement of Gospatric to Scotland, was given to Robert de Comines,<sup>2</sup> who set out at once to take possession. As he came nigh to Durham, a warning was given to him by bishop Æthelwine that he would run the gravest risk by entering the city, which like the surrounding district was full of determined Englishmen who would die rather than submit. He entered with his troops, and while he was entertained in the bishop's palace they pillaged the houses of the citizens. The Northumbrians assembled in great force and at daybreak burst into the city, massacred the Normans, and meeting resistance at the bishop's palace, they set it on fire, and the newly created earl perished with his men.

13. Fresh hopes sprang up at this sudden gleam of success. A revolt at York followed immediately, and one of the Norman governors was slain, with part of the garrison. This was the

<sup>1</sup> He had been staller to Harold.

<sup>2</sup> Also written Comyn, Comin, Cumyn, and Cumming.

prelude to a larger scheme. It was now thought that an attempt might be made to place Eadgar on the throne, the aid of the Danes being counted on. Eadgar therefore, with the exiled English chiefs, returned from Scotland, and with the Northumbrian forces marched to York and attacked the castle. But the king, informed and urged by the governor, William Malet, marched swiftly with a strong force, surprised the besiegers who were most of them killed or taken, and devastated the city. A second castle was built, and the command was given for a time to William's trusted friend, Fitzosbern, who had to suppress another revolt as soon as the king had set out for the south. Eadgar again took refuge in Scotland. In June the western shires were agitated by a second merely wanton and piratical incursion of two of Harold's sons. They were defeated, and a large number of their followers slain, by Earl Brian, son of the Count of Bretagne. The two leaders escaped to Dublin, and finally disappeared from history.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible not to see that a people who could not concentrate their strength in resistance to an invader, but merely utter their irritation and discontent in such fitful, local, and palpably useless attempts, deserved to be beaten.

14. The long looked-for help for the English from Denmark came at last. In July of this year the expedition of Swend was on its way. A fleet of two hundred and forty sail, manned by all the forces of Denmark and a multitude of adventurers from other lands, appeared off the southern coast in August. It was under the command of Osbeorn, the king's brother, and of Cnut and Harold, the king's sons. After unsuccessful attempts on Dover and Sandwich, a raid for pillage near Ipswich, and an attempt on Norwich which was repulsed with much slaughter by Ralph of Wader, then commander of the garrison, the fleet sailed up the Humber (Sept. 8). It was just three years since the hostile armament of Harold Hardrada had appeared there. The Northumbrians eagerly welcomed their Danish kindred and allies. Englishmen from distant parts of the country came to share in the enterprise; and from Scotland came Eadgar and the

<sup>1</sup> Their sister Gytha, who retired to the court of Swend, is said to have married a Russian prince. Through the intermarriages of their children "the blood of Harold found its way into the veins of many of the princely houses of Northern Europe."—*Freeman*.



noble exiles Gospatric, Maerlswegen, and Archil. Still higher significance was imparted to the revolt by the fact that Waltheof,<sup>1</sup> son of Siward, now Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon, quitted William's court and took part in it. The news of the revolt reached William in the Forest of Dean, in Gloucestershire, where he was hunting, and at the same time watching for possible movements in the west. He did not at once set out for the north, his governors at York assuring him that they could hold out for a year. The prospect of the imminent war, and of all the miseries it must bring on the land, broke the heart of the venerable primate Ealdred, and before the allies landed he was dead.<sup>2</sup> As the Danes and English were preparing to march on York, the garrison, to clear a space round the castle, burnt the neighbouring houses. The fire spread and lasted for three days, even the cathedral being consumed. When the invading host arrived the garrison sallied out to meet them, and were cut to pieces. In the fierce fight in the streets, Earl Waltheof played a hero's part, doing deeds of desperate valour which won him a name in Danish as well as in English song. The castles were demolished, and the city was freed. But the brave struggle and the brilliant victory were thrown away. Instead of an army of patriots under a great leader disciplined to carry out a wise plan, the victors showed themselves a mere crowd of shortsighted, selfish plunderers, eager to get what they could and go away to enjoy it. The Northumbrians returned to their homes, the Danes to the fleet.

15. Meanwhile we hear of various risings in the south and west, encouraged probably by the presence of the Danes and the victory at York. Attacks were made on the castle at Exeter (Rougemont), and on Montacute, the castle built in Somersetshire by Robert of Mortaigne, Earl of Cornwall. Eadric the Wild, at the head of a force of English and Welsh, assailed Shrewsbury, and an insurrection in Staffordshire was formidable enough to engage the

<sup>1</sup> He was one of those whom William had chosen to accompany him on his first visit to Normandy.

<sup>2</sup> It is related that Ealdred, in consequence of some stores of provisions belonging to him being seized by the Norman garrison, went to London, presented himself before the king, and pronounced a solemn rebuke and curse on him. The King fell at his feet, restitution was ordered, and Ealdred was no more wronged.

king himself in its suppression. One by one these outbreaks took place, and one by one they were quelled. The sufferings caused by all this desultory fighting and by the rigorous measures which usually followed were immense. The people were pillaged by Normans and English alike, the cultivation of the land was neglected, and scarcity prevailed for years.

16. As soon as William heard of the fall of York, he hastened with a body of cavalry to the north. Gospatric had withdrawn beyond the Tyne, and the Danes were scattered about in Lindesey, their ships being drawn up on the coast. William first surprised and drove the Danes out of Lindesey, and then passed over the Humber into Yorkshire. As he had no means of following them, he provided for the defence of the district, and marched into Staffordshire. The revolt there was suppressed and avenged by terrible ravage of town and country, and by extensive confiscation of estates. William retired to Nottingham, where he heard of fresh landings of the Danes in Lindesey, and of convivial gatherings of Danes and English, interrupted by the sudden attack of the Norman commanders. Rumours of an intended celebration of Christmas at York induced him to march northward. Delayed for three weeks on the right bank of the Aire, for want, it is said, of a ford or a bridge,<sup>1</sup> he at last succeeded in crossing and continued his march. The Danes had fled, and no resistance appears to have been made to his occupation of the ruined city.<sup>2</sup> Once more he ordered the rebuilding and strengthening of the castles.

17. But this year of conflicts and calamities was not to close till a sadder chapter than all had been added to its history. Leaving the care of York and the watching of the Danes in the Humber to his officers, he set out in that winter season with a sufficient body of forces to direct and carry out the pitilessly cruel purpose which he is said to have sworn to in his first moments of rage on hearing of the fall of York. This was the great harrying of the north—an act of vengeance for the past, of policy for the future, which in its cold-blooded systematic cruelty and unshrinking completeness was at that time, and still remains, unparalleled

<sup>1</sup> A bridge appears to have existed on the spot, but to have been broken down. It was near the site of the castle of *Pontefract*, which may have been so named from this incident in William's march.

<sup>2</sup> According to one writer of later times, Waltheof made a stout defence, and the capture of the city cost a terrible slaughter.

in English history. Over the whole of Yorkshire—its wildest districts not escaping—over Durham, and part of Northumberland, passed to and fro the columns of the destroyer. The products of the earth, the products and the implements of human labour, the homes of men, in some instances even the domesticated animals, were burnt. All who dared to attempt resistance were slain. The whole country was desolated and turned into a waste. Large numbers of the people perished of starvation, and lay dead in the public ways. There were none to bury them. In some cases life was sustained on the flesh of horses, cats, and dogs, and even of men. Some for dear life made themselves slaves to any master who could give them bread. It is estimated by one writer of the time that not less than a hundred thousand persons perished. For nine years not a patch of cultivated ground was to be seen between the Ouse and the Tyne. Sixty years later the towns still lay in ruins and the fields untilled. The graphic accounts of contemporary writers are confirmed by the records of *Domesday Book*, in which the estates of the Norman lords in Yorkshire are described on page after page as ‘waste.’<sup>1</sup> By this terrible infliction the strength of the revolt was crushed. Eadgar and his friends again withdrew to Malcolm’s court. By a very difficult route, in severe wintry weather, William returned to York. Here, in the midst of the havoc he had wrought, he chose to stay and celebrate the festival of Christmas, for which purpose he had the crown and other *regalia* brought from Winchester. In the midst of these observances, the splendour of which must have seemed a mockery of the horrible realities around them, the year came to a close.

<sup>1</sup> Durham and Northumberland are not included in the great survey.

## CHAPTER IV.

## WILLIAM I. (1070-1076.)

1. THE first days of the next year (1070) found William at York, keeping Christmas with such pomp as was possible in the midst of the desert which he had made. In the brief breathing space of a week or two he was engaged in the settlement of Yorkshire,—that is, in the distribution among his followers of the newly-conquered districts. Alan, Duke of Bretagne, received the largest grant, and for the defence of his estate built a castle which he named Richmond, and around which grew up afterwards a town, church, and several monasteries. Ilbert of Lacy, William of Percy,<sup>1</sup> and Robert of Mortaigne, also received large grants. After this division of spoils, and still in the month of January, the king undertook a difficult march to the further north, where on the banks of the Tees a band of English exiles had found a camp of refuge. It was necessary to break up this gathering, and the report of the king's approach was sufficient to do it. It was on this occasion that Gospatric and Waltheof made their submission, and were reinstated in their earldoms. Waltheof was honoured by receiving in marriage Judith, a niece of William. The next task of the king was to subdue the territory which formed the bishopric of Durham. The bishop Æthelwine, with his priests, had already fled, and taken refuge in the holy Isle of Lindisfarne. The deserted lands were now overrun, and utterly ravaged, even the churches<sup>2</sup> being burnt with the houses. The episcopal city, peopled chiefly with famished and sickly poor, passed into the conqueror's hands. Returning from this final act in the conquest of the north, William, marching by untrodden and

<sup>1</sup> He was the founder of the great Percy family or name: the original Percies, however, became soon extinct, and the name was transferred to and perpetuated in other houses.

<sup>2</sup> One of these was the church of Jarrow, belonging to the monastery in which the Venerable Bede lived and wrote.

dangerous ways, was at one time separated from his army for a whole night; but he reached York safely.

2. With astonishing energy, William, hardly allowing himself an interval of repose, set out on another march, the difficulties of which in the depth of winter might have deterred a man of less resolute temper. The conquest of the city of Chester, and the district in which it stood, was the one deed still wanting to complete his conquest of England. When his troops, weary of their marches and labours, demanded their discharge, he shamed them into obedience by verbally consenting to their claim: 'Let them go; I do not want them.' The king shared all their hardships, frequently going on foot with them. The campaign was a hard-fought one, and the familiar process of harrying town and country was repeated. Exiles, rich and poor, swarmed from Cheshire and the neighbouring shires, and begged their bread in other parts of the country. Chester was taken, but whether it surrendered or was stormed remains unrecorded. A castle was built, of which Gerbod the Fleming, William's stepson, was appointed governor. He was also created Earl of Chester. After a visit to Stafford, where he founded a castle, William marched to Salisbury, and there reviewed and disbanded his army, punishing the mutineers by exacting of them forty days additional service. The Danish fleet still lay in the Humber, but undertook no important enterprise. During the winter Osbeorn accepted a bribe from the king, and for a sum of money, with permission to plunder the English whom he came to help, agreed to withdraw in the spring. The conquest, so far as it was the work of the soldier, was now accomplished, and William was in fact as well as in name king of all England.

3. The consolidation of the kingdom, with security against all attempts at a new subdivision, was henceforth the aim and the result of William's policy in State and Church. The general transfer of lands to Norman lords was accompanied by the establishment of a system of tenures or conditions of holding land, which, though not wholly new in England, was now for the first time fully developed and rigorously carried out. This was Feudalism, a system which had taken its origin in natural causes some centuries earlier, and had received from time to time further extension and development. On the Continent, especially in France,

it was already established. The first principle on which it rested was the doctrine that the sovereign was the proprietor of all the land, and might dispose of it as he would. After the conquest of England the king rewarded his Norman followers by grants of estates. At the same time he provided a military force for the maintenance of his power and of the integrity of the realm by requiring of them a stipulated amount of military service in each year. They were bound to furnish a certain number of knights, or fully equipped horsemen, for the royal service when demanded. The number of knights depended on the size of the estates. This duty was imposed alike on lay and on ecclesiastical grantees. The king's vassals or tenants-in-chief granted lesser estates to under tenants, who were in their turn bound to do military service to their lords, as these were to the crown. The estates held by those who had to do personal service were called knight's fees. The number of these fees altogether is stated to have been above 60,000. These feudal tenures were burdened with various other obligations. Every vassal, from the highest to the lowest, took the oath of fealty (fidelity) to his immediate lord, and did homage for his fee; that is, professed himself his lord's liege man. In return the lord was bound to protect him and secure him in his fee. In order to guard against the danger of which William had had experience in his Duchy,—rebellion of his tenants-in-chief, supported by their under-tenants, the latter having sworn fealty only to their own lords,—these under-tenants in England were compelled to swear fealty to the king. The king's vassals were called his barons, and attended him at the customary *Gemóts*. Their estates were called baronies. All feudal estates in England were granted in perpetuity, but were liable to return to the lord (*escheat*, as it was called), for want of heirs, or by forfeiture for felony or treason. Sums of money were payable to the lord on successions to estates and on sales. The former were called *reliefs*, the latter *finés*. Further payments under the name of *aids* were demanded by the lord when his eldest son was knighted, his eldest daughter married, or himself taken prisoner in war. Two of the most grievous incidents of these tenures, and which provoked long resistance, were *wardships* and *marriages*. On the death of a tenant, if the heir were under age, he became the ward of the lord, who took the profits of the estate during the minority. If the heir were a female, the lord might dispose of her in marriage. These

were the principal features of feudalism which, arising in the dawn of modern civilisation, determined the form and character of European society in the middle ages, and the far-reaching influences of which, surviving its mere form, are still living around us.<sup>1</sup>

4. The cessation of actual warfare after the fall of Chester left the king free to give attention to ecclesiastical affairs. The Church, like the nation, was to be brought into direct subjection to his rule, and he was now to begin the execution of his purpose as an ecclesiastical reformer. To co-operate with him in this task he had by his side the most illustrious scholar of the age, who was also to become no less distinguished for his capacity as a ruler of the Church. This was the Abbot Lanfranc, who had long been William's personal friend and trusted adviser, and to whom was probably owing the religious character given to the conquest by the sanction of the Pope. Born at Pavia, he became a professor in the university of that city, but settled afterwards at Avranches in Normandy, where his teaching attracted a large number of scholars. He became Prior of Bec, and later Abbot of the monastery of St. Stephen at Caen. In the spring of 1070 the formal deprivation of Stigand took place: the see of Canterbury was offered to Lanfranc, and, after some hesitation, was accepted by him. He was consecrated at the close of August. But the process of reform had already begun. In February or March the king had seized the wealth which had been deposited by English owners for safe keeping in various monasteries. Commissioners had been appointed, and they had in some cases carried off the charters and costly treasures of the monasteries. Three legates of the Pope soon after arrived to undertake the reformation of the English clergy. One of them was Ermenfrid, Bishop of Sitten, who had been twice before in England in the same capacity. Then began the process, essentially unjust and cruel, of transferring the great ecclesiastical posts to Normans, which, gradually and warily carried out, and extended to the lower situations in the Church, gave England at length a foreign hierarchy, as the transfer of lands had already given her a foreign nobility. Another important step was taken in obtaining the profession of canonical submission of the Arch-

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the influences of feudalism, see Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe*, Lect. IV.

bishop of York to the Primate of Canterbury.<sup>1</sup> Thus all the affairs of the Church were brought under the supreme control of Lanfranc, and through him of the king. One of the most memorable changes introduced at this time was the separation, by gradual advances, of the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. In the old English assemblies all matters alike were heard and judged, and the bishop and the ealdorman sat together. Bishops were now ordered to hold courts for the hearing of ecclesiastical causes alone. Thus was laid the foundation of the ecclesiastical courts, which through all changes have maintained themselves to the present time. The tendency of the policy of Lanfranc was to bring the English Church into closer relation and stricter obedience to the Holy See. The celibacy of the clergy was enforced, with some modification for a time: the payment of Peter's-pence was regularly made: and the sale of bishoprics and abbacies was prohibited. But when Pope Gregory VII. (Hildebrand) went so far as to demand homage of William, the king replied with a decisive refusal. It is clear, however, that by seeking the sanction of the Pope for his enterprise and by accepting the consecrated banner, William had given the Pope a great advantage, and placed himself in a very embarrassing position. He further showed his determination to maintain his own supremacy in ecclesiastical as well as in civil affairs by prohibiting the acknowledgment of any Pope in England and the reception of any papal decrees without his consent. His consent was also required before any of his barons or officers of state could be excommunicated or censured. This supremacy of the king was afterwards the subject of frequently recurring controversies. It was the matter in dispute between Henry II. and Thomas of Canterbury; and it was completely asserted and established by Henry VIII.

5. The calamities of northern England did not end with the Norman harrying in December 1069, and January 1070. Soon after William withdrew, Malcolm king of Scotland made an inroad into Cumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire; ravaging the land and mercilessly seizing or destroying whatever had escaped

<sup>1</sup> This was stoutly resisted by Thomas, the newly-appointed Primate of the North, and a temporary compromise was agreed to. On the trial of the cause at the Gemót (Easter, 1072) the precedence of Canterbury was established, But the controversy was far from extinguished.



the Normans. The Scots burnt the remaining villages, and even churches, with those who took refuge in them, slaughtered old men and infants, and carried off immense plunder, and so many captives that English slaves it is said might be seen on all the farms of southern Scotland. The horrors of the time were aggravated by a retaliatory inroad of Gospatric into Cumberland. While this warfare was going on, Eadgar, with his mother and sisters, arrived at Wearmouth, where Malcolm met them and promised them once more an asylum. He sought the hand of Margaret in marriage, and although she at first refused, avowing her preference for a conventual life, she yielded, and with the happiest results to Malcolm and to Scotland. The marriage gave fresh force to the influences which had already begun to make the northern half of Britain English.

6. The year 1070 saw the foundation laid of the monastery which William had vowed to build in memorial of his victory at Senlac. A small band of monks from Marmoutier in Normandy, were called to build and to occupy it. The king chose for its site the very spot on which the English had made their stand, and the high altar was to be placed where the banner of Harold had been planted. The objections of the monks to this site were overruled. By William's own desire the house was dedicated to Saint Martin, and was named Battle Abbey (*Abbaye de la Bataille*.) The works made slow progress, and before the house was completed its founder had died. The abbey was consecrated in 1094. It was declared exempt from all episcopal rule and exaction. Such exemption was then beginning to be frequently sought and granted, and the privilege became the occasion of many contests between the monastic houses and the bishops.

7. English resistance did not wholly cease when William had made himself king *de facto* of all England. The most memorable of the revolts which subsequently broke out was that in the Isle of Ely, with which the name and fame of Hereward<sup>1</sup> are associated both in history and in legend. In May 1070 the Danish fleet under Osbeorn and Bishop Christian was heartily welcomed in the waters of the Fen Country. About the same time Hereward appears in the same country as leader of a band of outlaws, marching to attack the monastery at Peterborough.

<sup>1</sup> He is noticed in the Great Survey as a landholder in Lincolnshire and Warwickshire. We also learn from it that he had at one time been an exile.

Its abbot, Brand, whose election had been confirmed by Eadgar, was dead, and in his place a Norman, Turolde, a determined man, capable of fighting, had been appointed, and was on his way with a body of troops to take possession of his house. On the second of June Hereward with his band, including some Danish allies, pillaged the monastery and burnt the town. They had just sailed away when the new abbot and his soldiers arrived. Before the end of the month the Danish fleet left the English coasts with the stolen treasures, and was overtaken and scattered by a storm. Osbeorn, who had so shamefully betrayed the interests both of Swend and of William, was banished from Denmark, and the English plunderers were excommunicated by the imprisoned Bishop Æthelwine, formerly of Durham. The patriot band appear to have remained in the Isle of Ely through the following winter. In the spring of 1071 the Earls Eadwine and Morkere escaped from the king's court, and in vain made fresh attempts to excite a popular rising. Eadwine was betrayed to the Normans, and after a brave resistance to them, was killed probably by those who betrayed him. They presented the head of the famous earl to the king, who for their treachery sentenced them to banishment. His brother Morkere joined the band of Hereward, whose stand for English independence was now exciting the hearts of his countrymen in distant shires.<sup>1</sup> The monks of Ely entered zealously into the cause, and Bishop Æthelwine came from the court of Malcolm to join in it. At length William undertook an expedition in person against the insurgents. William Malet, who had been governor of York, William of Warren, Earl of Surrey, and Ivo Taillebois, a landholder of the neighbouring district, are said to have taken part in it. The attack was to be made both by land and by water, and while the king fixed his headquarters at Cambridge, his fleet was stationed at the Wash. The insurgents took up their position in an island surrounded by waters of considerable breadth. At the narrowest point, at a place

Mention is made of him in the English Chronicles, but very briefly. Nothing is known of his origin, and the details of his story, as usually told, are derived from legendary sources.

<sup>1</sup> According to the legends, the "Camp of Refuge" attracted within its limits many other notable persons, among them Eadwine and Archbishop Stigand, who could not have been there.

named Aldreth, on the Ouse, the king had a causeway with bridges constructed, a task executed in the face of great difficulty and danger from the frequent attacks made by the insurgents. A tale is told that to counteract the belief of the Normans that supernatural agency was at work on behalf of the Englishmen, a witch was placed in a wooden tower at the head of the causeway, to overcome that agency by her enchantments. It is also told that Hereward succeeded in burning the tower, with the enchantress and the workmen. How the end came is not certainly known. The legend represents the monks of Ely as disheartened by the advance of the king's works, and especially by his seizure of the lands of the monastery, and thus turning cowards and traitors, and hastening the surrender of the Isle. Almost all the band fell into William's power. Frightful punishments were inflicted on many of them, but few or none were put to death. Of the leading men, Morkere, Bishop Æthelwine, and Ealdred, Abbot of Ely, were imprisoned.<sup>1</sup> Hereward alone refused to submit, and made his escape with a few companions by water. It is said, how truly or otherwise we cannot tell, that he lived as an outlaw, and from the shelter of woods carried on hostilities with the Normans: that he married a rich Englishwoman, and made his peace with the king: and that he was at last slain by a band of Normans who attacked him in his own house.

8. Border warfare was at this period going on between the Normans and the Welsh, but there are no events of primary importance to notice. Three great earldoms had been established along the north-west border towards Wales: those of Chester, of Hereford, and of Shrewsbury. The first, which had been created for Gerbod the Fleming, was given on his death in 1071 to Hugh of Avranches, whose character and deeds procured him the designation of the Wolf (*Lupus*). Peculiar privileges were granted to him, which made his earldom almost an independent principality. The earldom of Hereford, as already stated, was held by William Fitzosbern,<sup>2</sup> and that of Shrewsbury was conferred on Roger of Montgomery, who was already Earl of Arundel. Continual contests with the Welsh were going on, and by frequent inroads into the country, by aiding one Welsh chief or

<sup>1</sup> Æthelwine died in 1072, and Morkere in 1087.

<sup>2</sup> He was killed in Flanders in 1071.

prince against his rival, and by building castles on newly acquired territory, the subjugation of Wales was prepared and begun.

9. After a visit to Normandy in 1072, William was free to apply himself to the affairs of the North and to avenge the inroad and ravages of Malcolm, who continued also to give an asylum to the English exiles. As if bent on the conquest of the country, he collected a large army in which Englishmen as well as Normans served, and sent a fleet to watch and beset the coast. His march seems to have been unopposed. He passed through the Lothians, then an English Duchy, held by the kings of Scotland; passed the Forth into 'Scotland,' and reached Abernethy on the Tay. There Malcolm met him, not to try his strength in battle, but to make submission as vassal to William as his over-lord, and to swear fealty and do homage.<sup>1</sup> He gave his son Donald as a hostage for his fidelity. William thus became the formally acknowledged supreme lord of all Britain. Eadric the Wild accompanied the king in this expedition, and held a position of marked distinction. He had been received into the king's favour soon after the departure of the Danes from Ely. It is conjectured that Eadgar the Ætheling may have been compelled on this occasion to quit Scotland. William, on his return to England, passing by the spot on which Newcastle was soon after founded,<sup>2</sup> halted at Durham. Walcher, a foreign priest, had been appointed to the see the year before, and for his security against the possible attacks of the people of his diocese, it was necessary to build a castle for his dwelling-place. The building was now commenced. During the king's stay at Durham Gospatric was summoned before him. Old charges of crimes which had already been pardoned were revived against him, and he was deprived of his earldom and banished the kingdom. Malcolm gave him a friendly reception, and for his residence the castle of Dunbar with the lands belonging to it. The earldom of Northumberland was then conferred on Waltheof. In the year following this appointment, Waltheof, in fulfilment of the terrible obligations of a hereditary feud, ordered the murder of the family

<sup>1</sup> It is denied by some historians that Malcolm did homage for his kingdom. It was limited, they argue, to the lordships which he held in England, but the evidence is strong on the other side.

<sup>2</sup> The site of the Roman *Pons Ælii*.

of Carl, who had slain Waltheof's grandfather Ealdred (1016). The murder took place at Seterington in Yorkshire, where the victims were taken by surprise and only one escaped. Another of the sons was absent at the time.

10. In 1073 William again went to Normandy. A great popular revolt had broken out in Maine, a province which he had conquered three years before his invasion of England. He took a powerful army with him, a large part of it consisting of Englishmen, and these led, it seems likely, by Hereward. He took the castles of Fresnay, Beaumont, and Sillé, harried the country after his usual manner, and marched to take the chief city, Le Mans. The city was surrendered without bloodshed, and the whole province again submitted to him. He then returned to England, but visited Normandy once more in the following year (1074). The King of France, Philip I., had not seen without increasing jealousy and dissatisfaction the vast extension of the dominions of his great rival by the conquest first of Maine and next of England. His last success in the recovery of Maine probably gave occasion for a new scheme, which might at least cause William trouble if it brought no gain to Philip. The latter now invited Eadgar, who was visiting the court of Malcolm, to go and take up his residence in the castle of Montreuil, on the frontiers of Normandy and Flanders, whence he might harass William by inroads into his Duchy. Eadgar did not hesitate to fall in with this project, and sailed for France with his companions and all his treasures. A great storm drove some of the ships ashore, and Eadgar lost all his wealth. He found his way back to Scotland, and by Malcolm's advice sought reconciliation with William. His overtures were favourably listened to, and a special embassy was sent to conduct him to William's court at Rouen. From Durham he was escorted by the Sheriff of Yorkshire to the south coast, and thence to Normandy. There his position was in fact that of a prisoner, but in appearance it was one of high honour. Large grants of land were made to him, and a liberal pension was assigned him, with a home in William's palace. Thus he lived in ease and security, finding his chief amusement in the chase, for about twelve years. History then has to take notice of him again.

11. William was still in Normandy in the following year (1075), when a formidable conspiracy of Norman nobles in

England necessitated his return. The leaders were Ralph of Wader (Guader) then Earl of East Anglia (or Norfolk), and Roger, son of William Fitzosbern, and successor of his father as Earl of Hereford. Roger, whose fidelity to the king seems to have been already doubted, negotiated the marriage of his sister Emma with Ralph, and in defiance of the king's prohibition the marriage took place. It was celebrated either at Norwich, or at Exning in Cambridgeshire, and was attended by many great men, nobles and churchmen, and a crowd of Bretons.<sup>1</sup> Among the guests was the great Earl Waltheof, now the last English earl. After the banquet bitter complaints were uttered against the king, first for his prohibition of the marriage, then for his alleged crimes of poisoning, his spoliation of princes, invasion of England, and inadequate compensation of his adherents. Waltheof was appealed to, and pressed to join in the conspiracy. William's absence in Normandy seemed to make a favourable opportunity. A division of England into three portions, to be held by Ralph, Roger, and Waltheof, one of them to be king and the others earls, was proposed. It is not clear whether Waltheof consented to join them, but he knew the fact of the conspiracy and was induced at least to take an oath of secrecy. The Earls Ralph and Roger at once made preparations for war. Waltheof, instead of taking part with them, made confession of his oath to the primate Lanfranc,<sup>2</sup> and then passed over to Normandy to seek pardon of William. The revolt failed to attract the sympathy or aid of either Englishmen or Normans. The Earl of Norfolk led his forces, consisting largely of Bretons, to join the Earl of Hereford. The latter was encountered by a large force, collected and led by Bishop Wulfstan, Abbot Æthelwig, and Urse, Sheriff of Worcestershire. He was unable to pass the Severn, his troops were dispersed and himself taken prisoner. The Earl of Norfolk reached Cambridge, but his progress was checked by a powerful army under Bishops Odo and Geoffrey of Coutances. The earl fled before them without fighting. His followers were pursued, and either defeated in a battle<sup>3</sup> or dispersed and captured. By order of the bishops, the

<sup>1</sup> Ralph's mother was a Breton.

<sup>2</sup> He was probably actual if not nominal Regent during the king's absence.

<sup>3</sup> In one contemporary narrative a battle is said to have been fought at a place called Fagadunum, supposed to be Beecham or Bicham in Norfolk.

prisoners taken were barbarously mutilated, the right foot of each being cut off. The warlike bishops then marched to the siege of Norwich castle, whither Ralph had fled. The castle held out for three months, the defence being conducted by Emma the newly married Countess, her husband, it appears, having gone to Denmark.

12. William returned from Normandy soon after the surrender of Norwich, and at the same time it became known that a Danish expedition, commanded by Cnut and Earl Hakon, was on its way to England. The Danes sailed up the Humber and the Ouse, and after pillaging York minster, sailed away again. Meanwhile Earl Waltheof, who had been favourably received by William, and had returned with him from Normandy, was arrested and imprisoned. The trial of the rebel earls took place at the Christmas Gemót which met at Westminster.<sup>1</sup> Ralph had gone to join his wife in Bretagne, and a sentence of outlawry and confiscation of lands was passed on him. Severe vengeance was taken on the Breton mercenaries, and Earl Roger was condemned to imprisonment for life, with confiscation of lands. His haughty spirit and insulting behaviour to the king stood effectually in the way of any mercy being shown him, and he remained a prisoner till William's death. The fate of Waltheof was not so easily decided. The Witan did not agree on the question of his guilt, and he was sent back to prison at Winchester. His wife Judith was his bitterest enemy; but Lanfranc interceded for him, and the king was disposed to be merciful. His trial was resumed at the Whitsuntide Gemót (1076), and the influence of his enemies prevailed. He was sentenced to death in May. In the early morning of the last day of that month he was conducted from his prison to a hill outside the town, and while he was on his knees, uttering the Lord's prayer, his head was struck off by the executioner. His remains were hastily buried on the spot, and all was over before the citizens were stirring. Waltheof, the English patriot, victim of Norman injustice, soon became to his countrymen both saint and martyr. A fortnight after his death his remains were removed to Crowland Abbey, of which he had been a benefactor; and in 1092 they were again transferred from the Chapter House to the place of highest honour by the altar. Miracles of healing were reported

<sup>1</sup> Eadgyth, the widow of the Confessor and sister of Harold, had died a week before.

and believed to be wrought at his tomb. If we might trust the stories handed down to us, the perfidy of Judith was overtaken by a just retribution, but all that is certain is that she was a holder of large estates in England when the Survey was compiled, and that she founded a nunnery at Elstow, near Bedford. Matilda, Waltheof's daughter, married first Simon of Senlis, and on his death David, king of Scotland, thus bringing the earldom of Huntingdon into connexion with the Scottish crown.

13. At the time of the execution of Waltheof, William had still a reign of eleven years before him. But the story of those years stands in dark contrast with that of his earlier time. His contemporaries saw in his subsequent military failures, in the number of his enemies, in the revolt of his son, in the deaths of several of his children, and the strife and unhappiness in his married life, the just retribution of eternal justice for the great crime which he had deliberately committed in the execution of Waltheof. The deed was the first of the kind he had done. The injustice of it was glaring. For while Waltheof was put to death, whose guilt was not proved, and whose penitence followed immediately on his partial implication in the guilt of others, the two earls who had actually made war on the king were spared and sentenced only to imprisonment. Waltheof was a man to be feared, and he died that William might be secure on his English throne.



## CHAPTER V.

## WILLIAM I. (1076-1087.)

1. THE formation of what is still called the New Forest in Hampshire probably took place during the ten years between 1070 and 1080. It appeared to his English subjects the heaviest wrong he had done them. It is impossible that William's passion for hunting, his unscrupulous provision of spaces and means for its indulgence, and the miseries he thereby brought on the people, can be set forth with more power or pathos than in the words of the English Chronicle. 'He also set many deer-friths,<sup>1</sup> and he made laws therewith that whosoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind. As he forbade the slaying of harts, so also did he of boars. So much he loved the high deer as if he were their father. He also decreed about hares that they should go free. His rich men moaned, and the poor men murmured; but he was so stark that he recked not the hatred of them all.' Before the New Forest was made the king had above sixty forests, besides parks, in various parts of the country. But as he came to live more at Winchester, he would have in its neighbourhood a hunting ground vast enough to satisfy his passion for sport, at whatever cost of wrong and misery to his people. A large part of Hampshire, thirty miles in length, lying between the river Avon and Southampton Water, was therefore wantonly harried and laid waste.<sup>2</sup> Cultivated lands, human dwellings, consecrated churches, all were given up to destruction; and the wretched dwellers in villages and scattered cottages were driven away. The names of these exiles are given in Domesday. It was natural that men should take grave note of the fact that this New Forest was fatal

<sup>1</sup> *Deor-frith*, forests in which the deer were under the king's protection or peace (*friede*); *Deor*, at an earlier time, was equivalent to *Thier*

<sup>2</sup> A forest (*i.e.*, wilderness, not wood) already existed in the same district. It was of much smaller extent, and was called *Ytene*.

to two of his sons, Richard and William, and to one of his grandsons, also a Richard. Certainly the making of this New Forest was one of the measures of William which showed plainly enough that he was by no means always guided by the broad and far-seeing wisdom which is the mark of the real statesman. Judged even by a lower standard, it was as impolitic as it was unnecessary.

2. Brief mention will suffice of some miscellaneous events of the remaining years of William's reign. In 1076, after Waltheof's execution, he made an attack on Bretagne, and with a large army besieged the city of Dol. The city was relieved and William defeated by the allied forces of the Count and the King of France. It was his first defeat in war. He made a politic peace, and promised his daughter Constance in marriage to Alan, the Count's son. The marriage was celebrated the year before William's death. In 1077 broke out the quarrel between the king and his eldest son Robert. The latter had been declared successor to the Duchy of Normandy, and Maine had been treated as his already. He now demanded to have present possession of Normandy, which his father decisively refused. He found comrades and abettors in his quarrel, made a futile attempt on Rouen, and established himself in a border fortress,<sup>1</sup> whence to make inroads into his father's Duchy. The castle was taken by William, and Robert then set out on a course of wanderings through the neighbouring lands, taking gifts of money from princes, and wasting them in riotous living, and getting burdened with debt. Queen Matilda, his mother, supplied him with money and other gifts from time to time, without his father's knowledge, and contrived to do so after he knew and forbade it. This was the beginning of dissension and unhappiness between William and his queen. In 1079 Robert established himself in the castle of Gerberoi, in France, near the frontier of Normandy. Philip zealously befriended him, and many Normans and Frenchmen came to share his fortunes. In January 1080, William came to besiege the castle, and on one occasion a personal encounter took place between father and son. William was wounded, probably for the first time in his life, his horse was killed under him, and he owed his escape to Tokig, a thegn of Berkshire, who gave him his own horse, and was himself mortally wounded. The siege was

<sup>1</sup> The castle of Raimalast.

abandoned, Robert retired to Flanders, and before May of the same year, through his mother's pleadings, the admonitions of priests, and the intercession of princes and nobles, the father's resentment was appeased, and the rebellious son was forgiven.

3. About the same time that Robert was drawing friends and adventurers to the castle of Gerberoi, Malcolm of Scotland again invaded and harried Northumberland, slaying many men and carrying off much plunder. Trouble was also ripening in the northern earldom, which after the execution of Waltheof had been left to the government of Bishop Walcher. The bishop was not personally inhumane or tyrannical, but he did not restrain his favourites and subordinates, who were too ready to wrong the people in his name. Among those favourites were one Gilbert, Leobwine the bishop's chaplain, and Leofwine the Dean of Durham. Ligulf, a noble Englishman, connected by marriage with the family of Waltheof, was also an intimate friend and adviser of the bishop. Ligulf's plain speaking offended Leobwine, and at his instigation, in the spring of 1080, Ligulf was murdered by Gilbert and a band of soldiers in the service of Walcher and of Leobwine. Walcher expressed sorrow and proclaimed himself guiltless, but nevertheless continued to favour the murderers. The matter was referred to a *Gemót* of the earldom, which met at Gateshead, in the open air, on the 14th of May. The people were agitated, and the bishop, dreading violence, went into the church, his guilty favourites with him. After some exchange of messages the cry was heard—"Short rede, good rede; <sup>1</sup> slay ye the bishop!" Instantly the attack began, and those friends of Walcher who were among the crowd were slain. Gilbert, coming out of the church, was slain with his knights; next Leofwine and other priests who followed: and last, the bishop, on Leobwine's refusal to go forth, went out, and while attempting to speak was cut down. The church was burned, and, escaping from the flames, Leobwine too was slain. An unsuccessful attack was made by the people on Durham castle, and savage revenge was taken for the murder of Walcher by Bishop Odo, who harried the whole district, and indiscriminately mutilated the innocent and the guilty.<sup>2</sup> In the following

<sup>1</sup> A proverbial saying: The shortest counsel is the best.

<sup>2</sup> Odo seized and carried off from the cathedral a pastoral staff, made of sapphire, exquisitely wrought.

autumn an army was sent, under the command of Robert, to avenge the inroad of Malcolm by an inroad into Scotland. Nothing is known of the details of this expedition. On his return, Robert laid the foundations of New Castle on the Tyne, opposite to the spot where Walcher was slain. In 1081 William led an army into South Wales, subjugated a part of the country, and founded Cardiff castle. He made a pilgrimage to St. David's, and an offering at the shrine.

4. The most noteworthy event of the year following (1082) is the fall of Odo. He was the holder of a bishopric in Normandy and of an earldom in England, and exercised in both countries the chief power next to the king's; but his ambition and greed were still unsatisfied. He had earned for himself the bitterest hatred of the English, and his latest deed, the indiscriminate revenge taken on the Northumbrians for the murder of Walcher, was perhaps his worst. He was now dreaming of a seat in the chair of St. Peter, and of grasping the sovereignty of the world. Catching at a prediction of some Italian soothsayer that the successor of Gregory VII. would be an Odo or Otto, he bought a palace at Rome, began to intrigue there and to scatter bribes among the men who had influence, and collected a force or an escort of nobles and knights to accompany him to Italy.<sup>1</sup> William, on hearing of his design, promptly set sail from Normandy, and meeting his brother in the Isle of Wight, brought accusations against him in an assembly of the chief men, and ordered his arrest. But no one obeyed; barons and knights and wise men had not the audacity to violate the 'divinity that hedged' a bishop. The king then arrested him with his own hand. Odo protested—'I am a priest, a minister of the Lord. The Pope alone may judge me.' William replied—'I do not seize the Bishop of Bayeux, but I do seize the Earl of Kent.' Odo was then taken to the castle of Rouen, and lay there a prisoner till William was dying.

5. In 1083 the king lost his wife. She died after a long illness, and her remains were laid in the beautiful church which she had built at Caen. Another revolt broke out about the same time in Maine, and the king went over to suppress it. But he

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Chester was among those who agreed to follow him.

could only establish a garrison to watch and check the rebel lord.<sup>1</sup> Peace was not made for three years. Meanwhile William was recalled to England by the tidings of a new Danish expedition against him (1085). Swayed by various motives, Cnut, king of Denmark, had assembled a fleet of a thousand ships, augmented by six hundred sent by the Count of Flanders, his father-in-law, and by sixty sent by Olaf, king of Norway. To repel this formidable force, William collected an immense host of mercenaries on the Continent, brought them over with him and quartered them on his vassals, earls, bishops, and abbots alike. By his order the coast districts were devastated and the population driven inland. The Danish fleet lay for a year on the coast of Jutland; dissensions began among the men, fostered perhaps by intrigues and gifts on the part of William; in July 1086 Cnut was killed in a mutiny at Odensee, and the vast preparations came to nothing.

6. Great discontent was caused by the imposition in the winter of 1083-1084 of an unusually heavy tax.<sup>2</sup> Six shillings was exacted for every hide of land<sup>3</sup> in England, and in consequence of the transfer which had taken place, the burden fell almost entirely on the Norman holders. The Christmas Gemót of 1085 held at Gloucester is memorable for the order there made for taking the Great Survey of the kingdom. For the purposes of taxation especially, it was needful to obtain a complete and trustworthy account of all the property and resources of the nation. For this purpose commissioners were sent into every shire to conduct the necessary inquiries, and they were empowered to take information on oath from the sheriffs, the great landholders, the priests, and some of the men of each town or lordship. They were to ascertain and record the name of the district or place, the number and names of the holders of land, the extent of wood, meadow, and pasture, the money value of the estates, and the taxes paid to the crown. These particulars were to be given in a threefold form; first, for the time of Eadward the Confessor, next for the time when King William gave the

<sup>1</sup> Hubert of Beaumont, who from his hill fortress of Sainte-Susanne ravaged the county.

<sup>2</sup> This is considered by some authorities a revival of the *Danegeld*.

<sup>3</sup> The *hide* appears to have varied in extent: comprising sometimes 120 acres, but often much less.

lands, and lastly for the time of the Survey. It was also to be inquired whether the value could be increased. A passage in the English Chronicle shows how rigorously the inquisition was carried out, and how bitter were the feelings which it roused in the people. In many districts there were disturbances and conflicts which led to bloodshed. But the work was accomplished, and the record, unique and wonderful, remains one of the most precious monuments of our history; throwing light upon the condition of England, the various classes of the population, the division of the lands, the state of the dispossessed Englishmen, and the laws and manners of the time.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the Survey was completed a great Gemót was held on Salisbury Plain (August 1st, 1086). Sixty thousand men are stated to have been present, and in pursuance of a law then passed every man of the assembly was obliged to take the oath of fealty to the king. A grievous tax was then laid on all against whom any charge could be brought, by right or by wrong. Immediately afterwards the king left the Isle of Wight, where he had been staying, for Normandy, and he saw England no more. The curses of the people followed him.

7. The end was now not far off, and it was to be an awful one. The ruling passion had hardly abated, although the burden of nearly sixty years pressed heavily and health was failing. Hereditary sovereign of Normandy, conqueror of Maine and of England, William's ambition was still unsatisfied and craved larger dominion yet. To gain it was worth another war, this time with France. The possession of the Vexin, a county bordering on France and Normandy, had long been disputed between the sovereigns of the two countries, and William on his arrival in his Duchy began to negotiate with Philip for its restoration to Normandy. While the negotiations went on William was confined

<sup>1</sup> The completed record was called the *Great Roll* or *List*, the *Roll of Winchester*, and *Domesday*. It was placed in the cathedral of Winchester, and at a later time was transferred to the Chapter-house at Westminster. It was written in Latin on vellum, and formed two volumes, one in folio, one in quarto. Various conjectures have been offered as to the meaning of its name, 'Domesday.' Some see in it an allusion to the Day of Judgment; others to the *Domus Dei*, the chapel at Winchester in which it was kept. In Latin it was rendered *Liber Judicialis* or *Censualis*. It was published in fac-simile, as nearly as possible, in 1783, the printing having occupied ten years. In 1865 a fac-simile produced by photozincography was published.

to his bed at Rouen undergoing medical treatment for his excessive corpulence. A vulgar jest of Philip is said to have angered him, and he vowed vengeance with a terrible oath. In August 1087 he suddenly assembled his forces and made an inroad into the disputed territory, laying the land waste, destroying the ripening corn, the grapes and other fruit, and enjoying the havoc he made. He reached Mantes, and pressing in with his troops and the townsmen who had come out to plead with him, he gave orders to burn the town. It was utterly destroyed, houses, property, and churches. In a frenzy of rage he rode among the ruins: his horse stumbled: he was thrown forward on the saddle and received a blow from the tall pommel which at once disabled him. He was carried to his palace at Rouen, and soon, for quiet's sake, to the priory of St. Gervase outside the city. There he lay for several weeks in great pain but in full possession of his faculties.

8. There was no hope of his recovery, said his physicians. His prelates and priests were in attendance to perform the customary sacred offices, to receive his penitent confessions, and to direct perhaps the course of his dying beneficence. He had lived a soldier and a robber, and would fain die, in form at least, a saint. The wealth which he had heaped up by cruelty and robbery, he now distributed 'to pious uses.' He gave money to rebuild the churches which he had just burnt at Mantes, and money and other gifts to the churches, monasteries, and the poor of England. He then confirmed his promise to his eldest son Robert, who was not present, to leave his Duchy to him: he declined to appoint his successor in England but, confessing distinctly the cruel wrongs he had done to Englishmen, expressed his wish that William, who was present, should succeed him in that kingdom if Lanfranc judged it right. To his youngest son Henry, also present, he gave five thousand pounds in silver, bidding him be content to let his elder brothers go before him, and adding that his time would come after theirs. At the urgent prayer of his attendants he ordered his noble captives, English and Norman, to be set free. Among them were Morkere, Siward, Beorn, Wulfnoth the brother and Wulf the son of Harold, Roger Earl of Hereford, and Bishop Odo. The liberation of Odo was reluctantly conceded. William and Henry did not tarry to see the end. William, having obtained his nomination as next king of England,

set out at once, bearing a letter from his father to Lanfranc. Before sailing, the tidings of his father's death was brought to him. Henry hastened away to take possession of his silver and to see it placed in a strong coffer. It was not long before the king set out on his longer journey. The sound of the minster bells awoke him at sunrise one morning (9th or 10th September), and he asked what it meant. When told that they were ringing prime at the church of St. Mary, he said—and these were his last spoken words—'To my Lady Mary, Holy Mother of God, I commend my soul;' and presently he died. Ceremonious attendance was no longer needed, and those who had been watching now fled in haste. They feared for their property. Their vassals and servants fled too, but first pillaged the chamber and carried off all they could. The corpse of the king was abandoned, and lay nearly naked on the floor. The townspeople were seized with a panic, for the strong ruler of the land was gone, and they feared as if an enemy's host were at the gates of the city.

9. At last, a few priests and monks who retained or had recovered their self-possession, formed a procession and came to pray for the soul of the departed. The Archbishop of Rouen ordered that the burial should be in the cathedral church of St. Stephen at Caen, and in the absence of kindred, of nobles, officers, and servants, the last duties were undertaken by a Norman country knight, named Herlwin, for good nature and the love of God. Arrived at Caen, the body was received by the abbot and his monks, with priests and others, and was borne in procession towards the minster. Before reaching it the procession was broken up by the glare of a fire which suddenly spread in the town, and the monks alone remained and bore the body to the church. A grave had been opened and a crowd of Norman prelates and barons had gathered there to witness the last rites. Among them were two men especially noteworthy, Odo of Bayeux, too well known to Englishmen, and Anselm, Abbot of Bec, soon to be Archbishop of Canterbury, and destined to win abundant honour and love in his adopted country. The mass was said, the praises of the dead were spoken by one of the prelates, and the body was ready to be lowered. Then came a startling interruption of the solemnities. A knight,<sup>1</sup> standing forth from

<sup>1</sup> His name was Ascelin Fitz-Arthur.



the crowd, said: 'This land is mine; here stood my father's house; the man you pray for took it by force to build this church on it: it is mine, and in the name of God I forbid the burial of the robber here.' The challenge was discussed by the bystanders and the claim was found to be true. The bishops at once paid the challenger a fair sum for the grave, and promised to pay afterwards the full price for the site of the church. The body still lay on the bier, and a stone coffin stood ready to receive it. The coffin was too narrow, and as force was used in the deposition, the body burst. Incense and perfumes were freely burnt, but in vain. The crowd dispersed, and the priests hurrying over the rest of the ceremony, left the church as fast as they could.

10. The character of William the Conqueror is portrayed with singular force and evident impartiality by the author of the English Chronicle, a contemporary. Some passages of his account must be quoted:—'If anyone wish to know what manner of man he was, or what worship he had, or of how many lands he were the lord, we will describe him as we have known him; for we looked on him, and sometime lived in his herd.<sup>1</sup> King William was a very wise man, and very rich, more worshipful and strong than any of his foregangers.<sup>2</sup> He was mild to good men, who loved God; and stark<sup>3</sup> beyond all bounds to those who withsайд his will. He was very worshipful. Thrice he bore his king-helmet every year,<sup>4</sup> when he was in England; at Easter he bore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster, and in mid-winter at Gloucester. And then were with him all the rich men over all England: archbishops and diocesan bishops, abbots and earls, thegns and knights. Moreover he was a very stark man and very savage: so that no man durst do anything against his will.' 'Yet among other things we must not forget the good frith<sup>5</sup> which he made in this land, so that a man that was good for aught might travel over the kingdom with his bosom full of gold without molestation, and no man durst slay another man, though he had suffered never so mickle evil from the other. He ruled over Eng-

<sup>1</sup> Court or retainers. <sup>2</sup> Predecessors. <sup>3</sup> Stiff or stern.

<sup>4</sup> 'This public wearing of the crown was in some sort a religious ceremony, a continuation as it were, of the original rite of consecration, and the crown itself was placed on the royal head by one of the chief prelates of the land.' (*Freeman*.)

<sup>5</sup> Peace.

land, and by his cunning he was so thoroughly acquainted with it, that there is not a hide of land of which he did not know both who had it and what was its worth; and that he set down in his writings.' 'He took from his subjects many marks of gold and many hundred pounds of silver; and that he took some by right and some by mickle might for very little need. He had fallen into avarice, and greediness he loved withal.' The chronicler winds up his description with the prayer, 'May Almighty God have mercy on his soul and grant him forgiveness of his sins.'

11. The children of William I. and his queen Matilda were four sons and five or six daughters. The sons were Robert, the eldest, who succeeded his father as Duke of Normandy; <sup>1</sup> Richard, who was killed by a stag in the New Forest; William and Henry, who became successively kings of England. The daughters were Cecilia, who in 1075 took the veil, and entered the convent founded by her mother at Caen; became abbess in 1113, and died in 1127; Constance, who was married to Alan, Duke of Bretagne, in 1086, and died four years later; Adeliza, who died young; Adela, who in 1080 was married to Stephen, Count of Blois, and became the mother of Stephen, King of England, and of Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester; she died in 1137. Gundred, wife of William of Warrenne, is stated by some writers to have been a daughter of the king; she died in 1085. Another daughter is mentioned, who was betrothed to Alfonso, King of Castile; her name is unknown. William had also a natural son, William of Peverel, to whom he gave great estates in Derbyshire.

<sup>1</sup> He was surnamed *Gamaron* (round-legs) and *Courthose* (short-hose).

## CHAPTER VI.

## WILLIAM II. (1087-1100).

1. WILLIAM II., surnamed from his complexion the Ruddy (rendered *Rufus* by the monkish historians), was about twenty-seven years of age at the death of his father. The third son of William I. in order of birth, he was second in order of survivorship, Richard, the second son, having been killed in the New Forest. He was his father's favourite, his constant companion in all his journeys and campaigns; but nevertheless filial love was not strong enough to detain him by his deathbed to see the end. Having received from the Conqueror the expression of his wish that he should succeed him in England, he lost no time in setting out to take possession of the crown. Archbishop Lanfranc, while willing to see him on the throne, required of him, before publicly declaring in his favour, a solemn promise to govern lawfully and justly, and to follow his counsels. Meanwhile William had got possession of the royal treasure, gold, silver, and jewels, kept at Winchester, and had distributed sums of money to various churches and monasteries, that masses might be said for his father's soul. A Gemôt was held at Winchester on the 26th of September, at which William was elected king, and the coronation took place immediately in the cathedral, Lanfranc placing the crown on his head. It was not quite three weeks since the death of William I. in Normandy, when the second Norman king of England was received at Winchester.

2. The Duchy of Normandy had quietly passed into the hands of the eldest son Robert, and thus for a time the duchy and the kingdom were separated. No attempt seems to have been made by Robert at first to secure the crown of England for himself. It was, however, the first time in English history that a younger son was preferred to an elder as successor to the crown. The first act of William as king was to arrest, and again imprison

three English captives who had just been released by his father's command: Wulfnoth, Harold's brother, Morkere and Siward Beorn. They had followed the young king to England, hoping that they might perhaps in the early days of his reign recover some portion at least of their estates. This deed boded ill for Englishmen under the new rule, and the foreboding was only too well fulfilled. The reign of William Rufus, which lasted thirteen years, was one of the most inglorious in our history. The king was personally a slave to the lowest passions. He indulged, after the death of Lanfranc, without restraint in the grossest vices. As a sovereign he was arbitrary and tyrannical, quick to make politic promises and quick to break them; greedy of money to pay the cost of his profligacy, and unscrupulously rapacious, filling his own purse by robbery of great men or poor men, baron, prelate, monk or peasant, as it suited him; impoverishing the rich by seizing and holding their possessions, and grinding down the mass of the people by excessive taxation. All that history has to tell of his reign is petty and insignificant except the burdens and miseries that weighed down his people. The chief matters to be noticed are his quarrels and wars with his two brothers, and with some of his barons, hostilities with Malcolm of Scotland, an invasion of Wales, and the persecution of Archbishop Anselm.

3. In the spring of 1088 a conspiracy was formed against the king by some of the barons, with Bishop Odo at their head. To the barons, who had most of them great estates both in England and in Normandy, it would have been more agreeable that both countries should remain under one sovereign. A war between the two would necessarily be injurious and embarrassing to them. But they were not all of one mind as to who should be both king and duke: some preferring Robert, others William. Odo, still as ever ready to instigate and take the lead in rebellion, hated the Primate Lanfranc, and for his sake hated also the young king who had been his pupil and was still guided by his counsels. He proposed therefore that Robert should be placed on the English throne, and having made known to him his project, received his sanction and his promise to come over with an army to England without delay. Odo and his friends arranged their plan of action at the Easter Gemót at Winchester. Odo would appear as the champion of Robert in Kent, while the other chiefs would do

their part in their respective earldoms; William, Bishop of Durham, in Northumberland, Roger Montgomery in Shropshire, Hugh Bigod in Norfolk, Hugh Grantmesnil in Leicestershire, and Geoffrey of Coutances in Somersetshire. At the same time Robert was collecting an army in his Duchy, but as usual he moved slowly, lacking both energy and money. The English insurgents fortified their castles and ravaged the king's lands, committing acts of plunder and violence which roused the hostility of the English against them.

4. To provide against this formidable movement the king drew his English subjects in large numbers into his service by making them liberal promises. He would govern by the best laws of his predecessors: he would restore to them the right of hunting in the forests: and he would levy no more unjust taxes. English seamen were sent to cruise in the Channel, to intercept the Norman vessels as they came irregularly across; and this service was so well performed that the projected invasion was frustrated. In response to the king's call it is said that thirty thousand stout Englishmen presented themselves for service under his standard. The king himself took command of them, and led them first to Pevensey, where Odo was awaiting Robert and his army. After a siege of seven weeks the castle surrendered, and Odo escaped with life and liberty, only on condition of giving up Rochester castle to the king and then quitting England for ever. This he swore to do. He was then conducted by a small party of horse to Rochester, but instead of ordering the surrender of the castle, by a crafty understanding with its governor, the notorious Eustace of Boulogne, he got himself and his escort arrested as traitors to Robert, and then held out in defiance of the king. The fortress was of great strength and strongly garrisoned, and long resisted the vigorous attacks of the royal army. Pestilence or famine at last aided the besiegers, and Odo capitulated. He and his knights, much against the will of the English troops, were let go with arms and horses. Their departure with banners lowered was accompanied by flourish of trumpets and shouts of execration: Odo having in vain begged to be spared the burst of triumphal music. As soon as possible this hated prelate, whose voice had pronounced the blessing on the Norman army at Senlac, sailed for Normandy to return to England no more. The strength of the insurrection was now

broken. The energy of William, the procrastination of Robert, the banishment of Odo, and the fall of Rochester castle, left the insurgent barons small hope of success in their enterprise, and they were with little difficulty won over, or defeated, or banished. The estates of some of them who were attainted were distributed among the barons who had served the king.

5. The failure of Robert's friends in England was followed by a counter attempt on the part of William in Normandy. Since the death of the Conqueror the great Duchy had fallen into anarchy. The garrisons which had been placed by him in all the castles, in order to restrain the turbulent barons, were expelled, and rejoicing in their new licence baron made war on baron, and the land was filled with confusion. Robert had neither the strength nor the decisive energy needed to keep or to restore order and obedience. Want of money led him to sell the Cotentin, nearly a third part of his Duchy, to his brother Henry, who gave him three thousand pounds for it. The brothers soon after quarrelled, and Henry was thrown into confinement. William meanwhile, with the aid of his Norman adherents, got possession of Albemarle, Saint Valery, and many other fortresses in Normandy (1090). He had almost succeeded in getting possession of Rouen, through the treachery of Conan, one of its citizens. A conflict took place in the streets, which ended in the defeat of the English, under Reginald of Warren, and the imprisonment of Conan. The latter was placed in the custody of Henry, who, taking him to the summit of a tower, invited him to admire the landscape and then, it is said, suddenly flung him over the battlements and killed him. The King of France at the same time had taken up the cause of Robert, and marched an army to the borders of Normandy; but he took a large bribe from William, and led his army back again.

6. In January 1091 William invaded Normandy, but through the influence of the barons who had estates in both countries, and by the mediation of the King of France, fighting was prevented and a treaty of peace concluded. It was arranged that William should retain the fortresses of which he had got possession in Normandy, that Robert should be indemnified by equivalent territory in England, and that his adherents who had been attainted should have their estates restored to them. It was further agreed that the survivor of the two brothers should succeed to the dominions of the other. This reconciliation was immediately fol-

lowed by a joint expedition of Robert and William against their younger brother Henry, whose remarkable abilities and energy of character had already excited their jealousy. Having seized his castles they followed him to the almost inaccessible fortress on Mount St. Michael, and after a fortnight's siege Henry was compelled by want of water to capitulate. He was allowed to withdraw into Bretagne. After two years of wanderings and hardships, with a few attendants, Henry was chosen governor of the town of Domfront. In connexion with the treaty just concluded between the duke and the king we hear once more of Eadgar the Ætheling. Not long before the death of the Conqueror he had left his court and gone with a body of knights to join the Normans in southern Italy. He was now at the court of Robert, and on the demand of William he was deprived of his lands in Normandy and driven to take refuge again in Scotland.

7. In the spring of 1089, and therefore before the war in Normandy had begun, the Primate Lanfranc died. He had been the king's chief minister and counsellor, and his influence had checked the worst propensities of his former pupil. These propensities were now not only left unchecked by his wise admonitions, but were fostered and flattered by the man who was chosen to take his place as chief minister. This was Ralph, a Norman priest who had followed the Conqueror to England. He was a man of low birth, ambitious, licentious, and unscrupulous. First notorious as a spy and informer, he set himself to win the favour of the king, and succeeded too well, for he obtained the offices of chaplain, treasurer, and justiciary. He acquired the surname of the Flambard (Firebrand). His wit and his vast power as minister were applied to devising and carrying out new schemes for extorting money from the nation for the use of his master. He increased the rigour of the forest laws: for the sake of new penalties he invented new crimes: accepted fines by way of commutation for capital punishment: and under the pretext that some estates were underrated in Domesday, had another survey of the kingdom begun. To him also was due the suggestion, which the king readily adopted, that bishoprics and abbacies vacant by death reverted to the crown, and that their revenues were to be applied to the king's use until he appointed successors. The new prelate or abbot was required to pay a sum on appointment proportioned to the value of the benefice. Acting

on these principles William appointed no successor to the primacy for four years, but seized and squandered its large revenues in his own pleasures. In the Lent season of 1093 he fell ill at Gloucester, and the bishops availed themselves of a fit of penitence to urge on him once more the appointment of a new primate. At that time Anselm, Abbot of Bec, who had been held in high esteem by the Conqueror, and was especially desired to attend him on his death bed, was in England, the visitor of Hugh Earl of Chester. He was sent for now to attend William in his sickness, and under the abbot's advice, the king made promises of amendment, of just laws, of restoration of church revenues, and of pardon for offences against the crown. The primacy was at the same time given to Anselm, who refused and protested, but at last accepted it, and was consecrated in December 1093.

8. During William's absence in Normandy in 1091, Malcolm suddenly invaded the northern counties of England, overrunning and pillaging them, but he was repulsed by the local chiefs and forces. After William's return, accompanied by Robert, who came expecting the fulfilment of the terms of their treaty, the two brothers marched against Malcolm. As the armies were on the point of battle a peace was arranged (Sept. 25) through the mediation of Robert and Eadgar the Ætheling. Malcolm did homage to the King of England, and the latter engaged to give him the lands and the pension which he had received under the Conqueror. Eadgar was allowed to return to England and received an appointment at court. Robert, failing to get his claims satisfied, went back to Normandy. On his return southward William founded a castle at Carlisle, expelled the lord of the district, and repopled the town, which had been destroyed by the Northmen about two hundred years before, with a colony of Englishmen from the south. This act was probably regarded by Malcolm as an invasion of his rights over Cumberland, which had been held by the heir to the crown of Scotland. A fresh quarrel broke out, and Malcolm, on the summons or invitation of William, attended the Gemót at Gloucester (August 1093), but refused to submit his cause to the barons of England alone. He returned to his kingdom, and hastily levying forces made another inroad into Northumberland. His army was surprised by Robert Mowbray, and himself and his eldest son Eadward slain (Nov. 13). His



army fled, and the bodies of Malcolm and his son were discovered by peasants and buried at the abbey of Tynemouth. The queen Margaret, sister of Eadgar, died of excessive grief four days later.<sup>1</sup>

9. In the following year (1094) William was again in Normandy. Robert had been pressing his claim to indemnity without success, and at last sent, according to a custom of chivalry, two heralds who, admitted to the royal presence, denounced the king before his barons as a false and perjured knight, and on behalf of Robert renounced his friendship. To clear himself William appeared before a court of twenty-four barons, who had bound themselves by oath to see the treaty between the duke and the king carried out. The decision was against him and he resolved to appeal to the sword. The aid of the King of France once more turned the scale against him, and once more he bought off the French. The required sum was raised by a roundabout process. He had a levy made in England of twenty thousand men and, instead of shipping them to Normandy, compelled them to pay ten shillings each for his service, and then sent them to their homes.<sup>2</sup> King Philip took the bribe, and left Robert to fight or fall as he might.

10. Before any decisive result was reached, William was recalled by dangers at home. Troubles were constant on the Welsh marches. The sight of the Norman castles and the presence of barons and knights had not lessened the hostility of the Welsh to their English neighbours, nor put an end to their plundering inroads. Taking occasion of the king's absence in Normandy, they were more active and aggressive than usual. A general rising was prepared, Anglesey was reconquered, and the border shires of England were devastated. Most of the Norman garrisons were slain or driven away. In 1095 the castle of Mont-

<sup>1</sup> Donald Bane, Malcolm's brother, seized the supreme power, the young children of Malcolm being placed in the care of Eadgar in England. Donald was opposed by Duncan, a son of Malcolm and a hostage at the court of William, but Duncan was murdered, and Donald retained the crown till 1097, when Eadgar, with English aid, placed his nephew and namesake on the throne. Donald died in prison.

<sup>2</sup> It seems unlikely that so many men suddenly got together should every one be able to pay the ten shillings. Various suggestions have been made in explanation, but it is certain that a large and sufficient sum was actually raised.

gomery was taken by surprise, and the garrison killed. William marched into Wales with a powerful body of cavalry; but the Welsh avoided fighting a battle, contenting themselves with incessant harassing attacks and leaving their mountains to do the rest. After a few weeks William had to retreat. He repeated the attempt in 1097 with no better success, and could only order the erection of additional castles on the borders.

11. About the same time with the first march into Wales, a formidable conspiracy against the king was being formed in the northern shires, the real aim and extent of which was only discovered after it was frustrated. The Earl of Northumberland, Robert Mowbray who, by his vast estates, his family alliances, and the military force at his command, was perhaps the most powerful subject in the land, rebelled against the king. His long absence from the court excited suspicion and, although a decree was published for the outlawry of any baron who did not appear at the Whitsuntide Gemót (1095), he disobeyed it. Without delay William marched into his earldom, captured several of its fortresses, and built near the impregnable castle of Bamborough, in which the earl held out, another castle which he named *Malvoisin*, or Bad Neighbour. He then returned to the south. The earl was soon after treacherously allured from his castle, and to escape pursuit took refuge in the monastery of Tynemouth, where after a desperate resistance for six days he was wounded and captured by the soldiers from Malvoisin. The surrender of Bamborough, which was held by the countess, was procured by presenting the earl before the walls and threatening to put out his eyes if she refused to give it up. They had been married only a few months, and the loving wife opened the gates. A conspiracy was then disclosed by the deputy-governor of the castle, in which his lord, Hugh Earl of Shrewsbury, Odo Earl of Holderness, Walter de Lacy, William Count of Eu, and William of Alderic, the king's godfather, were associated. Their design was to dethrone William and place on the throne in his stead Stephen of Albemarle (Aumale), brother to Judith and nephew of the Conqueror. Mowbray was sentenced to imprisonment for life, and was sent to Windsor castle, where he lived for thirty years. Earl Hugh obtained a pardon for a large sum of money: Walter de Lacy escaped from England: Earl Odo was imprisoned and lost his estates: William of Eu had trial by battle, and being

beaten, had his eyes put out and was cruelly mutilated besides, while William of Alderic, who was popularly believed to be innocent, was hanged. The confiscated estates were for some time left without an occupier and without cultivation, but the royal officers continued to levy the usual territorial tax, and extorted its amount from the men of a town or a hundred in which the land lay. Odo Fitzhubert, governor of Colchester, won the gratitude of the inhabitants by taking on himself the burden of the tax in his district, as well as by his generally just rule.

12. The acquisition of Normandy, so eagerly coveted by William and so vainly attempted by the sword, was at length brought about as one incidental result of a vast movement which was beginning in Western Europe. The first crusade was preached by Peter the Hermit in 1095, and formally proclaimed by Pope Urban II. at the Council of Clermont the same year. An enthusiasm was called forth which has now become almost incredible, difficult even to understand in the changed conditions of our time, for the delivery of the Holy Land, with its specially Holy Places, from the rule of the Saracens. Among the princes who caught the flame was Robert Duke of Normandy, and to provide himself with the equipments befitting his rank he borrowed a large sum<sup>1</sup> of his brother William, resigning to him as security for its repayment the government of his Duchy for five years. The King of England, notwithstanding his rapacity, had not enough in his treasury for the occasion, and therefore appealed to his barons and great churchmen; they in turn appealed to their vassals, and the money, mainly wrung from the already impoverished people, was obtained and sent to Normandy. Robert set out to play a brilliant part as a soldier of the Cross, and to be offered, it is said, the kingdom of Jerusalem. William sailed for Normandy, of which he took peaceful possession. But the great province of Maine, which had cost the Conqueror so much to win and to keep, refused to submit to his son. A general rising took place, at the head of which was a young noble, Héli de la Flèche, who had established his claim to the county. After a good deal of fighting Héli was taken prisoner, and although the King of France and the Count of Anjou interfered, the latter as

<sup>1</sup> Ten thousand marks. The mark was a coin of the value of thirteen shillings and fourpence.

over-lord, Hélie was dispossessed and set at liberty (1099). The next year he attempted to recover the county, but William was swiftly there to resist him. Hélie raised the siege of Mans and fled, and William, after ravaging the land, came back to England.

13. The friendly relations of the king and the primate ended with the interview which took place when the king was on his sick bed. The penitence and the promises of that day passed away with the sickness which had occasioned them. Seven months passed before Anselm could be persuaded to do homage to the king. He was consecrated in December 1093, and as he was going in procession to his cathedral he was arrested by the Flambard on a charge of having violated the royal prerogative. So small a portion of the revenues of the see were left to him, that he had not the means of making such a gift to the king as was expected on his promotion. This led to unseemly and repeated disputes. Anselm offended the king, too, by acknowledging Urban II. as legitimate pope before he had been acknowledged by himself.<sup>1</sup> Anselm was tried before an assembly of his peers at Rockingham, and an attempt was made to get him deposed, but unsuccessfully. After angrily refusing the primate permission to go to Rome to receive the *pallium*, the cloak or mantle which was the symbol of his dignity, the king secretly sent his recognition of Urban to Rome, procured the *pallium*, and, failing in attempts to sell it to anyone else, gave it up to Anselm. But he still retained the vacant benefices, and would not allow the holding of synods. At length the primate, who was more fitted for the life of a recluse than for that of an energetic actor in the world's affairs, quitted England in October 1097, and retired to Rome. He did not return till after the death of William Rufus.

14. In the summer of that year the king made another unsuccessful campaign in Wales, and more castles were built on the marches. He also undertook and commenced three great works, —the building of a wall round the Tower of London, a bridge over the Thames, and the Great Hall of Westminster. These works were all executed by forced labour, and men cursed him for the grievous oppression. The Hall was completed the year before the

<sup>1</sup> The papacy was at that time disputed between Urban and the Antipope Clement, and it was the king's right to decide for England between them.

king's death, and he held his court in it at Whitsuntide. About the same time he conferred on his favourite, the minister of all his misrule and his low pleasures, Ralph the Flambard, the see of Durham, receiving from him on his appointment the sum of one thousand pounds. So open and shameless was the traffic carried on by the highest in the land in what ought to have been sacred things. In the following year (1100), the king went on the 2nd of August, with a party of attendants, among them his brother Henry, who was then in England, to hunt in the New Forest. It is said that rumours and predictions of some sudden end to his vicious career had found credence among the people, and that uneasy presentiments and dreams had troubled himself. Late in the evening, a poor charcoal-burner going home through the forest, weary with his day's labour, found the body of the king, bleeding, dead, and abandoned. The breast was pierced with an arrow, the shaft of which was broken. How it happened, whether by accident or by design, and what hand had directed the shaft, must remain unknown. Vague rumour told that a Norman knight, Walter Tyrrel, a favourite comrade of the king in the chase, discharged the arrow, that it struck a tree, and glancing off, hit the king. Tyrrel, however, solemnly swore that he was not present at the time, and that he had not even seen his master in the wood. The poor day-labourer took up the royal corpse humanely, and bore it in his cart to Winchester, where the next morning it was buried in the cathedral but, it is said, without any religious rites. It is noteworthy that his brother and successor Henry had no investigation made into the mysterious death of William Rufus. The story of his reign has sufficiently revealed his character. In person he was of short stature and corpulent, in manner sometimes haughty and severe, sometimes free and mirthful to vulgarity. He was never married.

## CHAPTER VII.

## HENRY I. BEAUCLERC. (1100-1135.)

1. HENRY I. was the fourth and youngest son of the Conqueror, by his wife Matilda, and was born in England in the year 1068.<sup>1</sup> His birth being subsequent to the coronation of both father and mother as King and Queen of England, he stood in the position of an Ætheling, and the hopes of the English people appear to have been fixed on him early as their future sovereign. He was carefully educated, and showed such taste for learning that men began to call him the Clerk (Clericus). Nevertheless, grave faults of character showed themselves too plainly. We have already seen how he abandoned his father on his deathbed to take care of his money; how he quarrelled with his brother Robert; and how he flung Conan of Rouen over the tower and killed him. His licentiousness, too, was notorious. And now, when he was told in the New Forest that his brother William was lying dead there, he hastened away, careless of the body, to seize instantly the treasures at Winchester. He had no right to them. Robert was entitled to the preference in respect of birth, and he had a positive claim to the crown, as against Henry, by the terms of formal treaties. As he had not yet reached home from the crusade, Henry disregarded the claims which there was no one present to enforce, and violently defying the opposition of William of Breteuil, the keeper of the treasures, got possession of them. He was proclaimed at Winchester the day after William's death, and two days later (5th August) was crowned at Westminster by Maurice, Bishop of London.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If we might trust a local legend, the place of his birth was Selby, in Yorkshire.

<sup>2</sup> The primacy of York was vacant, and the primate of Canterbury, Anselm, was on the Continent.

2. The English were now a conquered people ; and, so long as their foreign king, the foreign nobility, and the foreign hierarchy remained united, their case seemed hopeless. But already dissensions had broken out among their masters ; and William Rufus, by calling the English to his aid against his rebellious barons, had rekindled their hopes and shown them a path open, though but by slow progress, to the recovery of their lost liberties. It was now Henry's policy to please and win them over to his support, and thus to make up for the weakness or want of title to the throne by popular favour. This was his aim in the first measures of his reign. The earliest and most memorable of these was the publication of a charter professedly re-establishing the laws of Eadward the Confessor, as settled by the Conqueror in the fourth year of his reign.<sup>1</sup> The ancient immunities of the Church were re-established ; the power of disposing of personal property by will was given to the king's barons, and they were required to give the same power to their sub-vassals ; restrictions on marriages were diminished ; arbitrary punishments by the king were to be discontinued ; and relief was provided for various feudal burdens. The charter, however, left untouched the peculiarly oppressive forest laws. These fair promises were made the day after Henry's coronation, and were solemnly confirmed at the Whitsuntide Gemôt of the following year. A liberal charter was also granted to the citizens of London. Further to gratify the people, the king recalled Archbishop Anselm, committed Ralph the Flambard to the Tower, and sent away from his court his own mistresses and the whole flock of depraved creatures who had been the companions of his brother's debaucheries.

3. Another step of unusual importance, not merely as pleasing to his English subjects, but as tending towards the gradual intermixture and union of the two races that were at present hostile, was the marriage of Henry to an English wife. His choice fell on Eadgyth (Edith), the daughter of Malcolm of Scotland and Margaret, sister of Eadgar the Ætheling. She was thus a descendant of the great Ælfred, and 'of the right kingly kin of England.' Her hand had been sought by several of the Norman

<sup>1</sup> This restoration of the laws obeyed by some former ruler dear to popular memory was not an uncommon practice. The laws of Eadgar's time had been restored by Cnut, and the laws of Cnut by Harold II.

barons. Alan, Duke of Bretagne and Earl of Richmond, and William of Warren had asked permission of William Rufus to marry her, but had not obtained his consent. She would not at first listen to the proposal of Henry, but afterwards yielded to the strong persuasion of her English friends. A difficulty was raised by some on the ground that she was a nun. This was felt so strongly even by Anselm, that at first he refused to marry her. Inquiries, however, were made, and the facts were found to be,—that Eadgyth had been sent from Scotland in early childhood to be brought up by her aunt Christina, who was abbess of Romsey or Wilton; that she had sometimes worn a black veil, as other girls had, to save her from the violence of Norman soldiers, but that she had never really taken the vows of a nun. The matter was judged to be of sufficient moment to require investigation by a council of great churchmen under the presidency of the primate. They decided that she was free to marry.<sup>1</sup> The marriage, therefore, was celebrated, and Eadgyth was crowned queen by Anselm on the 11th of November 1100. The Normans, who disliked the marriage, indulged themselves in silly jesting, and nicknamed the king and queen Godric and Godiva.<sup>2</sup> It is stated that to gratify the Normans the queen gave up the name of Eadgyth for that of Matilda or Maud.

4. Robert, although absent for a time, had not forgotten or renounced his claim to succeed to the English throne. He had started from the Holy Land soon after the taking of Jerusalem (August 1099), and passing into southern Italy was received with enthusiasm by his countrymen, whose castles were everywhere frowning over that sunny land. In one of these castles, the seat of William, Count of Conversano, one of the family of Robert Guiscard, first Duke of Apulia and Calabria, Robert found a young daughter, Sibylla, fair and attractive, and worth the winning. He sought and won her hand, not without a rich dowry, and, after lingering several months in the south, returned with his bride to Normandy. Received with hearty welcome by his subjects, he put off to a later time, according to his habit, the enforcement of his claim to England. While he

<sup>1</sup> A similar question had been referred to Lanfranc in reference to the English women and girls who had merely found a temporary asylum in convents, and he had settled it in the same way.

<sup>2</sup> Familiar rustic names in old English songs.



was squandering his new wealth in mere feasting and display, Ralph the Flambarð made his escape from the Tower of London (February 1101), and passed over into Normandy. There he indulged his new hatred of the king, who had imprisoned him, by inciting Robert to immediate action for the possession of the crown of England. A large force was easily assembled, and encouraging promises of support came from some of the English barons. Henry made counter-preparations, confirmed his charter, made other concessions, and did all he could to strengthen his hold on his English subjects. He collected his army at Pevensey, and a fleet was set to watch the Channel and intercept Duke Robert. The seamen, however, deserted with most of the ships, and Robert, with his forces, passed over in those vessels and landed at Portsmouth (19th July). The armies approached each other, but instead of a battle there was a conference between the two brothers, which ended in a formal reconciliation and a hurried peace. For the yearly sum of 3,000 marks to be paid him by Henry, Robert renounced his claim to the English crown. All the castles which Henry held in Normandy, except Domfront, were to be ceded; the adherents of each brother were to be pardoned; and neither of them was to support the enemies of the other. It was further stipulated that if either died without lawful issue, the survivor should succeed to his dominions. The observance of this clause was guaranteed by the oaths of twelve barons on each side.

5. Robert returned to Normandy in the autumn, and Henry began to take his revenge on the adherents of his brother. He set spies to watch them, knaves to excite dissensions among them and to make reports to him. On any charge or pretext they were arraigned, found guilty, and declared outlaws. Their vast estates were then distributed among the obscure and needy creatures of the court. One of these outlawed nobles was Robert Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury, a man in whom the ordinary characteristics of the feudal baron were seen in their utmost offensiveness. Immensely powerful as the lord of vast possessions, proud, crafty and rapacious, he was also one of those monsters, happily rare, who seem to be cruel because they enjoy it. An indictment in forty-five articles was preferred against him (1102), and he made his appearance at the king's court. But suddenly withdrawing, he fled to one of his castles, and prepared for war

with the king. Henry gladly entered into the conflict, and first besieged and took Arundel Castle. He next marched to Bridgenorth on the Severn, and after a fruitless attempt on the part of some of the barons to make peace, the town was surrendered. Belesme had taken his last stand at Shrewsbury, whither the king followed him, a way being cut through dense woods for the march of the army. The earl surrendered, was deprived of his English estates, and banished the kingdom. In a similar way most of the nobles who had come over with the Conqueror were got rid of, and their places filled by new men.

In the following year (1103), began the quarrel between the king and the primate respecting investitures. The particular matter of the dispute was whether a temporal prince should be allowed to invest bishops and abbots, on their induction to their offices, with the ring and the crosier, the recognized emblems of their jurisdiction and of the conveyance to them of the temporalities of the benefice. The controversy in its substance was whether, in any country, the clergy were to acknowledge the Pope or the Prince as supreme. The formal dispute distracted Europe for more than half a century; the real question at issue, the true relation of Church and State to each other, is still open, and its satisfactory solution is among the most momentous problems of European states at the present time. The open quarrel of Henry I. and Anselm began at a council held in London in September. It was attended by bishops and monks who had been sent to Rome as representatives of the opposing parties, and the replies which they brought from the Pope were contradictory. Henry stoutly maintained his prerogative. Anselm at length undertook a journey to Rome to confer fully with the Pope, and the negotiations were protracted. The archbishop was ordered not to return to England till he was prepared to yield to the king. Three years passed away, and then, in the summer of 1106, the king and the archbishop met at the abbey of Bec for a friendly discussion of the matter, and a compromise was effected. As ecclesiastical persons and bodies were holders of vast landed possessions, they were held to be under the same obligations as lay holders; they were, therefore, bound to do homage and swear fealty to the prince as their superior lord. The arrangement agreed to in this case was that before the bishop and the abbot received their temporalities they should swear fealty and do

homage, and that the ceremony of investiture should be discontinued. The shadow was thus relinquished by the king, but he still held fast the substance, for his right of nomination to sees and abbacies remained untouched. Whatever view may be taken of the question in the abstract, it is impossible to give our sympathy to the parties on either side, for the use made by both of the power which they claimed was one of the greatest scandals of Christendom.

6. In 1103 Duke Robert came to England to intercede with his brother in behalf of the Earl of Surrey and other outlaws. Henry took advantage of his trustfulness and detained him as a prisoner. To obtain his liberty, Robert had to give up his annuity. On his return to Normandy he accepted the services of Belesme, anticipating that he should have to fight for his duchy. This served Henry as a pretext for declaring the peace between them at an end. He veiled his determination to conquer Normandy under the pretence of interposing to save it from the miserable consequences of the duke's misrule and incompetency. In 1105 he invaded the duchy and, partly by the sword, partly by the lavish distribution of bribes, he got possession of many of the castles. But the decisive stroke was reserved for another campaign. Meanwhile his English subjects were almost intolerably afflicted by the heavy and continual exactions of money, made on them to defray the expenses of his expeditions. 'The year 1105,' says the English chronicler, 'was most miserable, owing to the loss of the harvest and the taxes, the levy of which never ceased.' The next year (1106) Robert Belesme was again in England, seeking the restitution of his lands, but he was unsuccessful. Soon after, Henry invaded Normandy a second time, with more men and more money than before. He formed the siege of Tenchebrai about the end of July; the defenders were in great straits, and Robert marched to relieve the town. A fierce battle was fought, in which Robert distinguished himself by his bravery, and seemed on the point of winning the day. But the flight of Belesme and a sudden flank attack on the Normans by Hélie de la Flèche, turned the scale in favour of Henry. The duke was captured with four hundred of his knights,<sup>1</sup> and the

<sup>1</sup> Among the captives was Eadgar the Ætheling who had probably joined Robert shortly before the battle. This was his last appearance on the field of

king was received by the Norman barons in an assembly at Lisieux as their duke. The whole country submitted. It has been noted as a remarkable coincidence that the battle of Tenchebrai, by which Normandy was subjected to England, was fought on the very day of the month (September 28) on which, exactly forty years before, William the Conqueror set foot on England's shore, to make England subject to Normandy. Henry liberated some of his captives, freely or for a ransom, and some were imprisoned for life. Belesme obtained back some of his Norman estates; the infamous Flambard was restored to the see of D rham, as a compensation for surrendering Lisieux to the king, and the ex-duke Robert was sent to England and condemned to imprisonment for life. The place of his confinement was first Devizes, and afterwards Cardiff Castle. An attempt to escape led to a more rigorous treatment than he was first subjected to, and the horrible story is told by a writer<sup>1</sup> of a later age, that by order of his brother he was blinded by a cruel process which was common in that age. However willing we may be to give Henry the benefit of a doubt, from the absence of contemporary testimony, it is clear that his character and his known dealings with other enemies make this story only too probable.

7. Henry had now attained the object of his ambition; he was both King of England and Duke of Normandy. The success of any future attempt to dispossess him of the duchy seemed sufficiently guarded against by his possession of the persons of Duke Robert and of his only son, William, then five years old. The latter fell into his hands on the surrender of Falaise, soon after the victory of Tenchebrai. But this end of the king's endeavours proved to be a beginning of a new series of embarrassments and wars. The boy who might one day claim the duchy was placed in the care of H lie de Saint-Sa n, a Norman noble, whose wife was a natural daughter of Robert. When Henry, distrusting his fidelity, attempted to get possession of his nephew, H lie escaped with him, and they were received and protected at the neighbouring courts. Jealousy of the ambition and growing power of Henry inclined the King of France and the

history. He was liberated and sent to England, where he lived and died in obscurity.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris.

Earl of Anjou to devise and to favour any projects which might give him trouble. Before their scheme in behalf of William Fitz-Robert, as he was called, was ripe for action, Henry had arranged the marriage of his daughter Maud (Matilda) to the Emperor Henry V. (1110). Maud was only eight years old, and was sent to Germany to be educated. The emperor insisted on receiving with her a very large dowry, and to provide it a new tax at a ruinous rate was imposed on the English people. The next year (1111) troubles began in Normandy on the death of H lie de la Fl che, Count of Maine. The country was taken possession of by Fulk of Anjou, in right of his wife, the only daughter of H lie. Henry asserted his right to it as Duke of Normandy, and was supported by his nephew Theobald, Count of Blois.<sup>1</sup> Fulk was aided by the King of France. Hostilities broke out in 1113, and the petty warfare dragged on with alternations of success and defeat for two years, Henry losing many towns and castles in his duchy, and the people suffering all kinds of miseries from the ravages of the armies. Peace was concluded in 1115, entirely to the advantage of the King of England. He recovered what he had lost, the young heir to the duchy was left uncared for, and a marriage was negotiated between Henry's son William and Fulk's daughter Matilda; Fulk promising to withdraw his support from William Fitz-Robert, and to break off the contract of marriage between the latter and Sibylla, his other daughter. Henry spent much of his time in Normandy, passing over in 1111, spending the whole of the next year there, and going again in the autumn of 1113. About the time of the treaty of peace just mentioned, the Norman barons consented to take the oath of fealty and do homage to William, son of Henry, then about thirteen years old.

8. The peace was of short duration. In the following year (1116), Henry assisted Theobald of Blois in his revolt against his feudal superior, the King of France. He also broke off the marriage contract between his son and Matilda of Anjou, and irritated some of his Norman barons by breaches of promises recently made to them. A formidable league was now formed in favour of William Fitz-Robert, who, after being brought up at the court of France, had found an honourable refuge with Baldwin,

<sup>1</sup> An elder brother of Stephen, afterwards King of England, and of Henry of Blois, afterwards Bishop of Winchester.

Count of Flanders. This prince, who had a personal regard for William, resolved to draw the sword in his cause. He was readily joined by Louis of France, Fulk of Anjou, and the irritated Norman nobles. Henry passed into Normandy again in 1117, and the war which now began lasted for three years. Success attended first one side then the other, but the tide was decisively turned in favour of Henry by the death of Baldwin at the siege of Eu (June 1119). Fulk of Anjou, always open to mean influences, took a large bribe of Henry, and abandoned his ally and the cause of the young heir of Normandy. The marriage of William, son of Henry, and Matilda of Anjou, was at once celebrated. Louis being thus left to carry on the war alone, met Henry, by accident it is said, at Brenville near Noyon (August 20, 1119), each accompanied by a band of knights, five hundred English or Norman to four hundred French, and after a brilliant conflict, in which only three knights were killed, Louis was defeated, his horse was killed under him, and he escaped on foot with William Fitz-Robert. Henry's life was in imminent peril, for he received blows on the head from one of his Norman enemies, the deadly force of which was only broken by his steel helmet. After the battle presents were sent by Henry and his son to Louis and his protégé, and the captives were released without ransom. The intervention of the Pope, Calixtus II., was still needed to bring about a treaty of peace. Formal complaint against Henry had been made by Louis at the Council of Rheims, in October 1119, to which a reply was attempted by the Archbishop of Rouen. The Pope then visited Henry, to whom he was distantly related, listened to his vindication of his course with respect to the duchy and his brother, and arranged the conditions of a peace between the belligerents. The interests of Robert and his son were passed over in silence. By the treaty Normandy was secured to Henry, and the homage of his son, instead of his own, was received by Louis as feudal lord of the duchy.

9. Thus once more the grasp of King Henry was firm on his coveted duchy; his enemies were scattered, and he might return in exultation to his kingdom. Rejoicing in the brilliancy of his success, he knew not of the dread blow that was impending—the heaviest that could fall on his personal life, crushing his dearest hope and turning the rest of his days into mourning. In the course of the war his queen had died, ‘the good Queen Maud,’

as her people called her. Her married life had not been happy, and for twelve years she had lived apart from her husband, tasting the bitterness and the vanity of an existence surrounded with all the splendours of royalty while destitute of the common bliss of wedded love. A few weeks after her death, Robert, Earl of Mellent, the chief minister of the king in foreign affairs, died. He had the reputation of being the greatest statesman of his day, and was the friend of popes and princes. He was enormously rich, and still coveting more was unscrupulous in gratifying his desires. He was at the same time looked upon as the leader of fashion in dress and manners. And now, after losing his wife and his minister, the king was to lose his only legitimate son. The embarkation for England was fixed to take place at Barfleur on the 25th November (1120). The king sailed first, and landed safely at Southampton the next morning. His son, with a very large retinue of knights and ladies, accompanied also by his half-brother and sister, Richard and Adela, both illegitimate children of the king, sailed later. They embarked in a ship named the *Blanche-Nef*, belonging to one Fitz-Stephen, whose father had conveyed the Conqueror across the Channel on his expedition for the conquest of England. The hours of delay at Barfleur were spent in dancing, drinking, and dissipation. To such a pitch was the rioting carried that some of the passengers left the vessel, refusing to risk their lives. At last, in the bright moonlight night, with a pleasant breeze, the revellers started on their voyage. To make up for lost time, every sail was set, and oars were plied, and smoothly the ship sped along the coast. Suddenly she struck upon a rock; the side was stove in, and she began to fill. A boat was lowered, into which William entered with a few companions, Fitz-Stephen bidding them row to the shore. The cries of Adela recalled him to the ship, when so many threw themselves into the boat that it sunk with all that were in it. The ship, too, was not long in sight, and all perished but one man, a butcher of Rouen, who was picked up in the morning by some fishermen. Fitz-Stephen had learnt the fate of William, and refused to survive him. When the news reached England the courtiers dared not tell the king, but left the painful task to a young page. The king fell into a fainting-fit, and his grief was so deep that from that time,

it is said, he was never seen to smile. The English people, groaning under the Norman tyranny, knowing well the bad character and loose life of the Ætheling William, and not forgetting the contempt he openly showed for them and his mad threats of treating them like beasts of burden, could not be expected to mourn over his end. They saw in it one more act of divine retribution for impiety and for the intolerable wrongs inflicted on them by their foreign masters.

10. The year following this shipwreck the king undertook an expedition into Wales. That country had long been in a distracted state, and its history for many years is merely a tale of dissensions and fightings among its own chiefs, of conflicts with the Normans settled on the borders, and of inroads into England. Henry had not imitated in his dealings with Wales the rash and reckless policy of his predecessor. In 1108 he settled in the district of Ross, in Pembrokeshire, a colony of Flemings, large numbers of whom had been driven from their own land by inundations and other calamities, and had taken refuge in England. The industry and skill of these immigrants as manufacturers of woollen cloths was not appreciated in England, and their presence was felt as a burden. Partly, therefore, to relieve the English, partly to establish a check and a barrier on the Welsh, the king assigned them a district in South Wales. They had to suffer much from the assaults of the Welsh, but their numbers were increased by a transfer of those who had previously settled in Northumbria. Henry made his first expedition into Wales in the spring of 1114, but nothing is known of it except that some of the chiefs came and made peace with him, and more castles were built by the Marchers. The internal condition of the country remained the same. Seven years later (summer of 1121) Henry marched into the principality with a large army, and appears to have penetrated as far as Snowdonia. He had a narrow escape of his life on one occasion, being hit by an arrow aimed at him by some unknown hand. His coat of mail saved him. The chiefs submitted to him, gave their sons as hostages, and delivered to him money and immense numbers of cattle. The country was subdued, and for twelve years following there is not a single record of a conflict between the people and the Normans or Flemings. These conflicts with the Welsh were the



only wars of which England was the scene during the reign of Henry I.<sup>1</sup>

11. The death of the Ætheling William imposed on his father the duty of forming fresh plans as to the succession to the crown, and rekindled in William the Norman new hopes for himself. To frustrate these hopes was a prominent part of Henry's aim. In the hope of male offspring, he contracted, in February, 1121, a second marriage with Adelais or Alice, the young daughter of Geoffrey, Duke of Louvain, and niece to the Pope Calixtus II. Meanwhile the general expectation and hope of the nation fixed itself on William Fitz-Robert. The venal Fulk of Anjou, again angry with King Henry because the dower of his daughter was not returned to him, conferred on William the earldom of Mans, and promised him in marriage his other daughter Sibylla. The Norman barons were eager to take part in a new war against Henry. The latter tried the force of words, used threats and promises, tried also the force of bribes; and these failing, he made war in 1123 on the rebellious barons of Normandy. They were finally defeated in March 1124, the leaders were taken prisoners, and Fulk abandoned the cause of William. The loss of his support was compensated by the more powerful aid of Louis of France, who gave him in marriage his sister-in-law, and for her portion the counties of Pontoise, Chaumont, and the Vexin. In 1125 Maud the empress was left a widow, and Henry, whose second marriage was still childless, formed the bold resolution of appointing her his successor. There was no precedent in the history of the English or of the Normans for a female sovereign, and a strong opposition to the project was raised by the barons of both countries. Maud had no wish to leave her adopted country, or to be thrust into a position so precarious, but she submitted to her father's command and returned to England in 1126. The assent of the chief barons was yielded to the combined action of authority, promises, and money. The proposal of the king was formally made at a great council held at Windsor on Christmas Day 1126, and without one dissentient vote Maud was declared heiress presumptive to the crown in case of Henry's leaving no legitimate son. All the great lords, pre-

<sup>1</sup> It was Henry I. who first assumed the right of nomination to Welsh bishoprics, and subjected the bishops to the primate of Canterbury. This was a matter of frequent controversy in after-times.

lates and barons alike, swore to maintain her succession. Among them were Stephen, Earl of Boulogne, and Robert, Earl of Gloucester, and a question of precedence arising between them was decided in favour of Stephen.<sup>1</sup>

12. Three months after this acknowledgment of Maud a path was opened to higher place and power for William the Norman. Charles the Good, Count of Flanders, was assassinated at Bruges on the 1st of March 1127, and Louis of France, marching into the country, besieged and took Bruges, put to death the murderers, and, as feudal superior, gave the county to William.<sup>2</sup> The latter was thus placed in a favourable position for any attempt on Normandy, and the change caused Henry fresh alarm. During the same weeks he was engaged in further arrangements for strengthening the cause of his daughter Maud. Fulk of Anjou had taken the cross, and had given up the government of his county to his son Geoffrey, surnamed *Plantagenet*.<sup>3</sup> The marriage of Maud with Geoffrey now seemed to Henry a politic measure, and it was arranged without consulting the barons of England or of Normandy. It mattered little to the king that they complained, or that Maud gave only a reluctant consent to a match with a boy of sixteen. The marriage was celebrated at Rouen at Whitsuntide 1127, and rejoicings were prolonged by royal command for three weeks. Thus began the connexion between the house of Anjou and the royal line of England. An ominous declaration was made by some of the offended barons that this alliance, formed without their consent, released them from their oath to Maud. The ambitious aims of Henry were further forwarded by the death of William in the following year. Although the Flemings did not at first oppose his appointment as count, they revolted as soon as Louis and his great army withdrew, and Henry was prompt to support them. A new competitor appeared in the person of Thiedrick or Thierry, Landgrave of Alsace, and several important towns were given up to him. But in July, in a battle under the walls of Alost, William, after totally defeating Thierry, was wounded in the hand, and the wound,

<sup>1</sup> Stephen was nephew to Henry, as the son of Adela; Robert was Henry's illegitimate son.

<sup>2</sup> He might allege some claim to it as grandson of Matilda, daughter of Count Baldwin V.

<sup>3</sup> From his device, a sprig of broom, *plante de genest* or *genêt*.

either from neglect or unskilful treatment, proved fatal. He was removed to St. Omer, and died in the monastery July 27. He left no children, and his father, Duke Robert, had still to linger on some years in Cardiff Castle.

13. Thus, at last, the strong will, the clear vision, and the swift, unscrupulous action of the king had apparently triumphed over adverse circumstances and opposing ambitions. But the triumph was only in appearance, for Maud was never to reign after all; and the last years of the king were embittered by family dissensions, the fruit of his own deeds. The newly-married, uncongenial pair soon quarrelled, and Maud returned to her father. A year passed before a pretence of reconciliation was made, and Geoffrey received his wife back again. He demanded of the king that Normandy should be at once given up to him, and the king's refusal provoked him to angry threats and insults. Henry passed into Normandy in 1130, and in the following year Maud accompanied him to England. In September the king held a council at Northampton, and once more the barons swore fealty to her. In 1133 her first son, Henry, was born, afterwards to be Henry II., King of England. The same year the king again went to Normandy, and saw England no more.

14. The most important passage in the ecclesiastical history of this reign relates to the controversy with the Papacy about the reception and authority of legates of the Holy See. It was in substance the old ever-recurring conflict of royal and papal claims to supremacy. In form it was whether the Pope might depute a foreign churchman to inquire into the state of the Church in England, and exercise authority in its affairs without the express permission of the King. Legate after legate was sent—some of them were not allowed to land, others were admitted, but had to go away leaving their mission unfulfilled. Popes remonstrated, embassies went to and fro, the King himself discussed the matter in a personal interview with Calixtus II. at Gisors, but neither Pope nor King yielded his claim. The Archbishop of Canterbury succeeded, however, in getting himself appointed, by Pope Honorius, legate in England and Scotland. In 1130, on the death of Honorius II., a double election of popes took place by two bitterly-opposed parties in the Conclave. Henry, with other European sovereigns, had to choose his Pope,

Anacletus, or Innocent II. The latter, in fear for his life, left Rome and visited France; and at Chartres Henry, attended by many barons and prelates, had an interview with him. The English clergy were inclined to recognise Anacletus, but the king was in doubt. Present at the conference was the young Abbot of Clairvaux, by name Bernard, already widely known, and destined to be one of the most powerful men in Christendom. By his influence the king was induced to promise obedience to Innocent II.

15. The lives of the brothers Duke Robert and King Henry present at once remarkable parallels and contrasts. Each had a son, on whom ambitious hopes rested, and for whom a fair future might be anticipated. Each outlived the son for whom he was willing to live and strive. Robert, perhaps, may never have heard the fate of his son. Henry's latter years were darkened by the loss of his. Robert spent thirty-eight years in compulsory seclusion, perhaps part of them in blindness; Henry all the time taking eager part in the noisy politics and petty wars of his dominions; and at last the common lot fell to both. The prisoner died in his Welsh castle at the age of eighty, and in about one year the king followed him. In the early winter days of 1135 Henry, still in Normandy, heard of renewed troubles in Wales, and began to make preparations for his return to England and a campaign against the rebels. A few months before, he had quarrelled again with Geoffrey of Anjou, and the young count seized several castles in the duchy. The king's health and spirits had long been failing. He was still fond of the chase; and late in November, to drive his grief away, he went out to hunt. Eating, it is said, too freely of a dish of lampreys at night, he fell into a fever, and, as it quickly appeared, without hope of recovery. The Archbishop of Rouen was summoned to render the accustomed last ministrations of the Church; and at midnight of Sunday, December 1, 1135, the king died. To the nobles gathered about his deathbed—Robert of Gloucester, his son, among them—he renewed his appointment of his daughter Maud as his successor. He was in his sixty-seventh year. His body was brought to England, and buried in his abbey of Reading.

16. The character of Henry Beauclerc is depicted in diverse colours by friendly and hostile writers, but it is not difficult to

discern its real features. The narrative of his reign presents justification both for the praises of his friends and the reproaches of his enemies. It is plain that he had the virtues of a soldier, and the larger attributes of a great general; he was personally brave, skilful in forming, and prompt in executing, his military projects. He had much, too, of the far-seeing wisdom of the statesman, and was especially distinguished among the sovereigns of his age by his superior culture and his esteem for scholars, for the sake of whose society he lived much in his new palace at Oxford. But of his mixed character the worse side was the most familiar to his subjects. They suffered beyond telling from his rapacity, cruelty, perfidy, and revengefulness. His licentiousness was notorious. Perhaps the one fact most tending to reconcile the people to his rule, was that his strong hand 'made good peace in the land.' Between the miserable anarchy and violence of the days of Rufus and the days of Stephen there was interposed a period of quietness and security, which, in the later years of Henry's reign, was denoted by the phrase that 'Whosoever bore his burden of gold and silver, no man durst say aught to him but good.' By rigorous administration of the laws and severity of punishment he almost extirpated the race of robbers. In 1124, when death and mutilation was the penalty of crimes of violence, forty-four robbers were condemned and executed at one court, held by the Justiciary, Ralph Basset, in Leicestershire. At a subsequent time money payments, after being forbidden, were again allowed instead of the extreme penalties for crime. But while the king thus suppressed all private robbers, he played the part of robber-general himself. He would allow no one to do wrong in the land—except himself. His ambition involved him in frequent wars; for his wars and his bribes he wanted immense sums of money, and these were only to be had by taxation of his subjects. The hated *Danegeld* was regularly levied, and special occasions were frequently arising for special and excessive imposition. So unrelentingly was the system carried out that the principle of it could scarcely be better expressed than in the words of the highwayman, 'Your money or your life.' He spared neither churchman nor layman. In violation of the promises of his charter, he kept bishoprics vacant and took their revenues for his own use; extorted large sums from those whom he nominated to them; and sometimes seized

the property of a deceased prelate. He even went so far as to make money out of the canon which forbade the marriage of priests, by imposing a fine on everyone who disobeyed it. The forest laws were maintained by him with exaggerated severity. Barons were prohibited the chase, even on their own estates. Consequently the beasts of chase multiplied to an intolerable extent, and were sometimes seen in herds of a thousand together. Besides the sums he spent in his wars, he had enough for great personal display, for the rebuilding and decoration of the royal palaces, and for the formation of a large deer-park with a collection of wild animals at Woodstock. He built many castles on the Welsh Marches, and founded monasteries at Reading, Chichester, and Dunstable.

## CHAPTER VIII.

STEPHEN. (1135-1154.)

1. IN the times of which we are treating, the disposal of the crown of England was not regulated by any precise rules of hereditary succession. Originally elective, the custom grew up gradually and quite naturally of choosing the king out of one particular family—the royal family. The eldest son of a king was naturally considered to have a preference, but certainly no claim which might not be set aside by the Witan on the ground of unfitness, unpopularity, or youth and inexperience. Respect was customarily had to the dying wish or recommendation of a king; but it was of no binding force on the nation, which still had the free power, exercised by the Witan, of choosing their king. Even illegitimacy of birth, which in later times was held to be an insuperable bar, as if by some divine law, was no ground originally for excluding a competitor from election. Public sentiment, under the influence of church law, had begun to change on this point; and the right of succession, subject of course to the national choice, was now confined to those legitimately born. The death of Henry I., leaving no legitimate son, created a great practical difficulty. The succession of his daughter Maud, the empress, the object of his fixed desire and strenuous endeavour, secured, too, as he perhaps hoped by the professed adherence and oaths of his great men, appeared at once impossible. The ruler of bold knights, it was said, must not be a woman. The oaths of fealty to her were taken under compulsion, and even had they been spontaneous their obligation was set aside by her subsequent marriage to Geoffrey of Anjou, without the consent of the barons of England and Normandy. The son of Maud (Henry) was as yet only three years old, and an infant on the throne, with a long regency, was no less objectionable than a queen. The king's son Robert, Earl of Gloucester, was a man of great ability

and energy, a cool general, and superior in learning to many of his contemporaries, but he was excluded by his illegitimate birth.

2. Under these circumstances there seemed fair hope for any other candidate who possessed or could win the favour of the English people and the votes of the Witan. Stephen, Earl of Boulogne, the nephew of Henry I.,<sup>1</sup> was first in the field. He was now probably about forty years of age, beautiful in person, agreeable in manners, a brave soldier, and a general favourite with the people both of England and of Normandy. Brought up at his uncle's court, he had always enjoyed his especial favour, and had been trusted as one of the future supporters of Maud. By his marriage with Maud, daughter and heiress of Eustace, Count of Boulogne, he acquired the lordship of Boulogne and vast English estates which were held with it, and was also brought into connexion with the old royal family of England; his wife being the only child of Mary of Scotland, and thus niece to the 'good Queen Maud,'<sup>2</sup> the English wife of Henry I. Stephen had been the first layman to take the oath of fealty to Maud at the great Council of Christmas, 1126, but nevertheless he deliberately trampled on his oath, and supplanted her. He felt sure of the support of his younger brother Henry, who had some time before come over to England, and had been appointed, first, Abbot of Glastonbury and then Bishop of Winchester.

3. As soon as Stephen heard of the death of Henry, he sailed from Whitsand, and landed in Kent. Refused entrance into Dover and Canterbury, he passed on to London, which had attained a position of very great importance, the citizens being now considered as barons. They welcomed him with enthusiasm, and spontaneously hailed him king. Winchester, too, received him, and, by the assistance of his brother, the bishop, he got possession of the royal treasure. He found, too, that the Archbishop of Canterbury, William of Corbeil, and a more powerful churchman still, Roger, Bishop of Sarum (Salisbury), had been induced by the same assistance to side with him. Roger had been the life-long friend of Henry I., and had held the office of Grand Justiciary through a great part of his reign. He had also been entrusted with the duties of regent in the frequent

<sup>1</sup> He was the third son of Stephen, Count of Blois, by Adela, daughter of the Conqueror.

<sup>2</sup> Niece to Eadgar the Ætheling.



absence of the king. His love of money was notorious, but he had managed not to make himself unpopular. He had sworn to maintain the succession of Maud, and, like the rest, he paid no regard to his oath. The archbishop hesitated, but his scruple was removed by the statement on oath of Hugh Bigod that the king when dying had disinherited his daughter and nominated his nephew in her place. The way being thus cleared, and no formal election taking place, Stephen was crowned in Westminster Abbey by the primate on St. Stephen's Day, December 26, 1135. Strong now by his possession of the royal treasure, and by the power of rewarding his adherents; strong, too, by the title of king, which had in it a strange, half-magical power over the multitude of men, and by the solemn consecration of the primate with the accustomed rites, the hymns and prayers and anointing, Stephen soon saw the great men gathering to his court, objectors falling silent, and the English nation acquiescent.

4. Less than a month elapsed between the death of Henry and the coronation of his successor. But in that short interval—the death of a king involving then a temporary dissolution of government, and a lapse of the people into a state of almost savage independence—England and Normandy fell into a state of miserable disorder and confusion.<sup>1</sup> It was time that some one should be set to bear rule once more. Stephen crowned was now full king. After the coronation he went, in January 1136, to Reading, to take respectful part in the funeral of Henry, whose remains were interred in the abbey. From Reading he went to Oxford, and there held a *Gemót*, at which the barons and prelates took the usual oaths to the king, and the king made liberal promises to them of good government, redress of grievances, diminution of taxes, and permission to build castles. The Pope, Innocent II., on receiving information of Stephen's election from the bishops, the King of France, and Theobald of Blois, wrote a letter to Stephen, approving and confirming what had been done, and 'adopting him with paternal affection as a son of

<sup>1</sup> In this interval of kinglessness the English gave loose to their pent-up wrath and revenge in a determined destruction of the forests and the beasts of chase. It is stated that so great was the havoc of this onslaught, that two head of deer could hardly be found in a whole forest.

the blessed Apostle Peter and of the holy Roman Church.'<sup>1</sup> The promises of the king were embodied in a charter, which omitted the clauses relating to the *Danegeld* and the building of castles. In it emphatic mention is made of the consent of the clergy to the election, and of the confirmation by the Pope. The words were fair and pleasing, but neither words nor solemn oaths seemed to have for Stephen any sacredness or trustworthiness. The first months of the new reign passed quietly, but it was only a brief lull before a storm appears. At Easter Stephen held his court at London, and in the number of attendants, in the splendour of array, of gold and silver and gems, and in the magnificence of the feasts, it surpassed, men said, all that had been seen before.

5. Meanwhile Maud had no mind to be supplanted. Within a week of her father's death she appeared in Normandy, at first alone, and was received in some of the towns. Her husband, the Count Geoffrey, soon joined her with a body of troops, but Norman and Angevin could not be friends, and so powerful was the opposition raised that before the end of the month (December) he was driven back into his own territories. Normandy retained its connexion with England. Stephen obtained investiture of the duchy from Louis of France, who accepted the homage of Eustace, son of Stephen, instead of his own; and a marriage was negotiated between Eustace, still a child, and Constance, sister of Louis. A truce of two years was concluded between Stephen and Geoffrey, on condition of payment to the latter of a pension of 5,000 marks. In spite of these formal arrangements, Normandy continued in a distracted state for years. The two parties of Stephen and Maud kept up hostilities from time to time; barons fought first for one then for the other, and the people had to bear their part in accumulated sufferings. Stephen's power scarcely reached beyond the limits of the towns he had garrisoned. In February 1136, the cause of Maud was taken up by her uncle, David of Scotland, who had sworn fealty to her in 1126. He invaded England, took several of the northern towns, and had penetrated as far as Durham, when his advance was arrested by Stephen, who had rapidly marched against him with a large army. Negotiation took the place of fighting for

<sup>1</sup> Is it to be believed that the Pope knew nothing of Maud, her appointment by Henry, and the sworn fealty of the barons and prelates? Her name is not mentioned in the letter.

the present, and Malcolm was induced to make peace by the grant to him of Carlisle, Doncaster, and Huntingdon. His son Henry did homage to Stephen for these lordships.

6. The peace of the south of England was soon after broken by the revolt of Baldwin de Rivers, Earl of Exeter, who, with other nobles, declared for Maud. The revolt was easily suppressed and Exeter was taken by Stephen. Early in the year there were serious disturbances in Wales. In every part of the country fighting and pillage went on, but it came to an end without the intervention of the king. In 1137 Stephen visited Normandy, in the hope of winning adherents to his cause; but, although he scattered money with a free hand, he failed. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, who had come to England in 1136, and by taking the oaths of fealty and allegiance to Stephen had got possession of his estates, was all the while intriguing with the barons in favour of his sister Maud. Many of them were disaffected, and they began to seize the royal castles and parts of the royal demesne. These were soon retaken, and rebels were leniently dealt with. The permission to the barons to build castles was eagerly used, the land was almost covered with them, and their petty lords could defy the king, their fellows, and the laws. Robert, having obtained from David of Scotland a promise of another invasion of England, and having induced many of the barons to join in an insurrection against Stephen, quitted England, and soon after sent a renunciation of his fealty. The king took possession of his estates, but his castle of Bristol was successfully defended. Early in 1138 the Scottish invasion took place, but the invaders retired, again crossed the borders, and again retired. In August they appeared a third time. The host was very numerous, and had been collected from all parts of the kingdom. There was a bodyguard of knights and men-at-arms, many of them English or Norman exiles; there were pikemen from the Lowlands; archers from Teviotdale and Liddesdale; troops from Cumberland and Westmoreland; half-naked men from the Highlands and the Isles, armed with small round shields and the heavy broadsword called the *claymore*; and a multitude of the fierce men of Galloway, descendants of the Picts, armed with long pikes. The king himself led them on, and his son Henry marched by his side. The Scots are described as ravaging the country like savages. They burnt the villages and monasteries,

desecrated the churches, and killed old and young alike, sometimes with the most capricious cruelties. They made swift advance southward, and the English were in despair.

7. In the absence of the king, who had not time to reach the north, the defence of the land against the Scots was undertaken by Thurstan, Archbishop of York, who, though too old and too infirm to take arms and fight battles, was yet full of energy, and capable of rousing it in other men. At his summons were assembled at York the barons of the north, with their vassals; many parish priests, with the fighting men of their parishes, and volunteers of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Nottinghamshire, the latter all practised archers.<sup>1</sup> Ralph, Bishop of Durham, or, according to some accounts, the Bishop of the Orkneys, accompanied them as representative of the primate; and the chief commands were given to William Peverel, Walter Espec, and Gilbert and Walter de Lacy. The sentiment of patriotism was raised to the pitch of enthusiasm by appeals to the kindred sentiment of religion. Three days were spent in York, during which they fasted and prayed, and listened to the animating exhortations of Thurstan, his assurances of victory, and his promises of heaven to all who should give their lives in the war for their homes, their country, and their God. On the fourth day they swore fidelity to each other, received the primate's benediction, and set out on their march. After traversing about half the distance between York and Durham, they learnt that the Scots were on the Tees. The leaders therefore took up a position at Elfertun (afterwards named Northallerton), and waited the approach of the enemy.

8. On this memorable occasion the Norman lords, who, in all their pride and power and contempt for the conquered race, were compelled to call them to their aid, were not ashamed to incite their courage by politic appeals to their feelings as Englishmen, and to the saints known to be objects of special reverence in Northumbria. This was an indication of a turn in the tide of their affairs since the days when the great Lanfranc had avowed contempt for the English saints, and Abbot Paul, of St. Albans, had demolished the tombs of his English predecessors, and a

<sup>1</sup> The battle-axe, the old weapon of the English, had by this time fallen much into disuse, and, under new influences, the bow had taken its place.

papal Bull had prohibited the appointment of Englishmen to bishoprics or abbacies. It was a signal of hope for the conquered. Having selected their battle-ground, they set up in the centre of the position, as an inspiring symbol and a rallying-point, the standard from which the battle took its name. It was of the kind first devised at Milan a century earlier, and was familiarly known as the *Carroccio*. On a four-wheeled car rose a tall mast, at the top of which was a Greek cross,<sup>1</sup> holding in its centre the host or consecrated wafer enclosed in a silver casket; while below floated around it the loved and revered banners, which had long lain hidden and covered with dust in the churches of St. Cuthbert,<sup>2</sup> St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid. The loss of this standard was the worst blow that could fall on those who fought under it. Around the standard were now stationed the Norman knights, the English infantry and archers occupying the ground in front and on both flanks. The knights were addressed by Walter Espec, and swore fidelity to each other to the death. Just then the near approach of the Scots was announced.<sup>3</sup> Standing on the car, the English all kneeling round, the Bishop of Durham pronounced the absolution. The people shouted 'Amen,' and sprang to their feet to face the foe.

9. The Scots were marching in several divisions. Foremost, by their own persistent claim, came the Gallowegians; next to these the archers under Henry, David's son, whose bodyguard was formed of the men-at-arms; then the men of Lothian and the Isles; and rearmost marched the king, with a powerful body of cavalry and Scottish forces from various districts. The standard of the Scots was a lance with a twig of heather, and their war-cry was 'Albinn! Albinn!'<sup>4</sup> With a shout three times repeated, the sound of which must have almost blended with that of the English 'Amen,' they came on rushing towards the centre of the English, bearing back and for the moment, break-

<sup>1</sup> Not a crucifix, as sometimes stated.

<sup>2</sup> Or, according to some accounts, St. Peter of York.

<sup>3</sup> They had advanced under cover of a fog; but two Norman barons, who quarrelled with David, renounced his service at the last moment, and came over to the English camp. Their names were Robert de Bruce and Bernard de Baliol.

<sup>4</sup> The Gaelic name of their country, meaning the Alpine-land, or land of snow-covered mountains.

ing the front line. The flanks, right and left, were assailed and thrown into disorder; but the charge broke fruitlessly on the central phalanx, fenced around with spears. Renewing the assault, the Scots were attacked in flank by the archers who had rallied, while the knights round the standard remained unshaken. A hand-to-hand fight was kept up by the Scots for two hours, the formidable claymore trying its strength for the first time on the mail and plate armour of the Norman chivalry. At last the onset had exhausted itself, the slaughter was immense, and the men fell back, and in broken masses fled. The king retired in safety and good order to Carlisle, and was there joined by his son. Having reorganised his army he continued the war, and reduced Wark Castle in Northumberland. Yielding to the pleadings of Cardinal Alberic, the papal legate, he consented to a truce, and promised several humane ameliorations in the conduct of future wars. By the treaty of peace, concluded early in 1139, the Scots retained Cumberland and Westmoreland, and Henry received the earldom of Northumberland, the New Castle and Bamborough being excepted from the grant.<sup>1</sup>

10. Before the famous Battle of the Standard was fought, and the hopes of the friends of Maud, so far as they rested on the King of Scotland, were extinguished, Stephen had entangled himself in a more perilous conflict with the powers of the Church. Suspecting the fidelity to his cause of the wealthy and powerful Roger, Bishop of Sarum, and of his two nephews, Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, and Nigel, Bishop of Ely, and instigated by some of the personal enemies of Roger, he resolved to avert the danger of their possible hostility by relentlessly crushing them. Roger, whom we have already seen filling the high posts of justiciary and regent of the kingdom under Henry I., although no longer in office, retained immense influence. Minister of the Church as he was, he was at the same time builder and lord of many castles and fortified palaces. He had his escort of knights, his garrisons, and his armouries. Through his influence his nephews Alexander<sup>2</sup> and Nigel had obtained their sees; and like

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whether the war was undertaken by David in the interest of Maud, or for the acquisition of this earldom, which Stephen promised him and then refused.

<sup>2</sup> He was probably Roger's son.

him they had their fortresses and stores and fighting men at command. The meeting of the great council at Oxford, in June (1138), gave the opportunity the king wished for. A quarrel leading to bloodshed, which broke out, whether by accident or by concert we cannot know, between the retainers of Roger and those of two foreign nobles, served Stephen as a pretext for the sudden seizure of the obnoxious prelates. Roger and Alexander were arrested, but Nigel escaped to his uncle's castle at Devizes, determined there to hold out and defy the king. The surrender of their castles was insisted on as the only atonement for their breach of the king's peace in his own court. After some delay the castles of Newark, Sarum, Malmesbury and Sherborne were given up; and a threat of the king to starve Roger and Alexander till Devizes also was surrendered—a threat which was proved not to be an empty one by the appearance of the aged bishop, pale and worn, before the gates of the castle, pleading with his nephew to submit—prevailed with Nigel, and it was given up. Nigel was deprived of his see, but was restored in a short time.

11. The natural and immediate result of this violent proceeding on the part of Stephen was the decisive and passionate hostility of the priestly order, to whose support under the leadership of his brother, Henry of Winchester, he owed his throne. The most extravagant pretensions were loudly proclaimed, distinctly foreshadowing the great strife of priest and king in the succeeding reign. To touch the palaces of the prelates was to usurp the property of the Church; to touch their persons was sacrilege. Remonstrances and entreaties urged by his brother had no effect on the king. Henry then, in exercise of his special authority, as legate of the pope, cited the king to appear before a council or synod of bishops at Winchester. The synod met on the 29th of August. Stephen did not personally appear, but was represented by Alberic de Vere. The discussion lasted two or three days, on one of which a very remarkable speech was made by the Archbishop of Rouen. Alberic having brought accusations against the three bishops, the legate replied that they were ready to stand their trial before a proper tribunal, but demanded that their fortresses and property should be first restored to them. To this demand, which was in conformity with general usage, the Archbishop of Rouen was called to reply. He took his stand upon the recognized law of the Church, by which bishops were

enjoined to live humbly and peaceably, and forbidden to have part in the pursuits of war; and maintained that as they had by their vows bound themselves to obedience to these canons, it was not lawful for them to hold fortresses, and therefore they could not claim their restitution. No formal decision was come to, and the synod was brought to a close by Alberic, who appealed to the Pope on behalf of Stephen, and prohibited further proceedings. His knights, with swords drawn, were ready to enforce the dissolution.

12. The strife of words in the synod of Winchester and the open breach of Stephen with the clergy, formed the prologue to civil war; and the tones of debate were soon lost in the clash of swords. The synod broke up in confusion on the 1st of September; on the last day of the same month the inhabitants of Portsmouth saw the landing of the Empress Maud and Robert Earl of Gloucester, followed by a body of one hundred and forty knights. They were come to conquer a kingdom. The insignificance of their force might move to laughter, were it not for the huge train of calamitous consequences presently to follow their rash attempt. Robert, with only twelve followers, found his way unobserved into the western shires, where he hoped to collect and organize an army. Maud was received by the widowed Queen Adelais, at Arundel Castle, which was almost immediately surprised by Stephen. With a chivalrous courtesy which was fatally out of place, he weakly yielded to their pleadings and, leaving Adelais in her castle, permitted Maud to depart and join her brother. She was escorted to his headquarters at Bristol by the Bishop of Winchester. For a time there was indecision on the part of many of the barons; they waited to calculate probabilities of the strength and success of the two parties, and of the gains to be got in their service. Ultimately most of the barons held themselves aloof from the struggle, and, secure in their castles, played their cruel part of petty tyrants and aggressors over the helpless population around them. Thus the land was filled with strife and wrongs and miseries, and the hopeless wail of the people is still echoing for us in the pathetic words of the English chronicler. The cause of Stephen was supported by the garrisons of the royal fortresses; but such important towns in the west and south as Gloucester and Bristol, Canterbury and Dover, adhered to Maud. The barons in the Welsh Marches, too,



were most of them on her side. Stephen first attacked Bristol, but was repulsed. He next attacked the border castles, in some cases successfully. Meanwhile an insurrection had broken out in the Isle of Ely, under Bishop Nigel, whose strongly intrrenched camp was only accessible, as Hereward's had been, by means of bridges. Stephen marched against him and routed his followers, and the bishop hastened to join Maud at Gloucester. In Stephen's absence the conflict raged afresh in the west, and among the most active of the warriors were the Norman prelates. Their ecclesiastical titles were the only distinction between them and the barons. They wore armour, rode war-horses, bore the lance, directed sieges or charges, drew lots for the plunder, and relentlessly tortured any who were supposed to be rich, to compel them to pay a ransom. 'Militant' they were in a literal and earthly sense, and mercenary, for most if not all of them were fighting for the mere ends of personal pomp and power.

13. After the rout of Nigel, Stephen returned to the west, whence he was recalled, at the commencement of the year 1141, to suppress a new movement in the east. The dispersed insurgents of Ely had been collected by Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, who was joined by the Earl of Lincoln and Ralph de Gernon, Earl of Chester. Lincoln Castle was held by the latter, while the men of Lincoln were partisans of the king. The siege of the castle was formed, but Ralph succeeded in making his escape, and summoned Robert to his aid. Robert arrived at Lincoln with a force of 10,000 men on the 2nd of February, hoping to take Stephen by surprise, but the royal army was in battle array, prepared for the encounter. The king fought on foot at the head of his infantry, with fierce courage; his sword and battle-axe were both broken; his cavalry, under their traitorous leaders, fled or deserted at the first collision, and Stephen was taken prisoner. Conducted by the Earl of Gloucester to Maud, he was sent by her order to Bristol Castle, loaded with chains. The royal cause seemed now to be lost, and many who had wavered ranged themselves under the standard of Maud. To ensure and complete her success, and place the sceptre in her hand, she saw that it was above all needful to win over the great churchman, Stephen's brother, Henry of Winchester. Messages passed between them; and exactly a month after the battle of Lincoln the ambitious Maud, ex-empress, Countess of Anjou and would-be

Queen of England, and the equally ambitious bishop-legate and king-maker, met for conference on the lofty downs near the city of Winchester, the famous abode of the old English kings. It was the 2nd of March, and the weather was dark and stormy, portending, as might afterwards be fancied, the worse darkness and more destructive storms which the compact there concluded was to bring down upon the land. The terms of the compact were, that on condition of the bishop and clergy acknowledging Maud as the 'Lady of England,' he should be her chief minister, and dispose at his will of all vacant sees and abbacies; and that on condition of her fulfilling her engagements to him he would be faithful to her as his sovereign. The next day a stately procession passed along the streets of Winchester and entered the cathedral; and there, standing on the altar-steps, the bishop pronounced a blessing on all who should obey the empress and a curse on all who should resist her rule. In a few days other prelates, including Theobald, the recently appointed primate of Canterbury, avowed themselves on her side. They pacified their consciences for this violation of their oaths of allegiance to Stephen by obtaining from him a formal release, willingly overlooking the fact that a king in chains was disqualified for free authoritative action.

14. Maud now took possession of Winchester Castle, with the regalia and the royal treasure. Early in April a synod was held in that city, composed of bishops and archdeacons, who, after listening to the specious arguments of the legate, addressed first to each class of members by itself, then to all in common, consented to ratify the choice of Maud as Sovereign Lady of England and of Normandy. In his speech he put forward the audacious claim for the priestly order, that it was chiefly their right to elect and to ordain kings. It is not to be wondered at that while some greeted the speech with acclamations others sat silent, with grave dissentient thoughts, and forebodings of what must come of it. Maud was at once proclaimed. The next day an adjourned session was held to receive the deputies sent by the citizens of London to petition for the liberation of the king. Their request was supported by Christian, chaplain to the queen of Stephen. But these deputies, after protesting that they were not authorised to discuss or to assent to the choice of another sovereign, at last professed themselves satisfied with the

reasonings of the legate, and undertook to report them to their fellow-citizens. The synod was brought to a close with a decree of excommunication pronounced against many persistent adherents of Stephen.

15. Notwithstanding the professed acquiescence of the London deputies, it was well known that the citizens strongly preferred Stephen. Two months were suffered to pass after the proclamation of Maud at Winchester before she ventured to enter London. She appeared there just before Midsummer, and ordered preparations to be made for her coronation. But instead of prudently endeavouring to conciliate the inhabitants, she indulged without restraint her haughty and revengeful temper, and in a short time lost thereby the few friends who would have stood by her, and intensified the aversion of her enemies. She imposed a burdensome tax on the Londoners as a penalty for their adhesion to Stephen, and arrogantly refused their petition for the restoration of the laws of Eadward. She treated with the same contempt and insult the queen of Stephen and the legate himself. The latter was not a man to overlook a personal insult, and report soon reached Maud that Henry of Winchester and the wife of his brother had met privately at Guildford. But before that interview took place Maud had been driven from London. The city, one fine summer's morning, was thrown into a state of excitement by the appearance of a body of cavalry on the north side of the river. They marched under the banner of Maud, the wife of Stephen, who had kept together a small number of followers in Kent. The news spread, bells rang out, and the people ran to arms. The empress heard of it as she sat at table, and only escaped capture by a headlong gallop from the city. Accompanied by a few friends she reached Oxford, and never saw London again.

16. From Oxford she sent a summons to the legate to attend her court immediately, and received for answer the message that 'he was getting ready for her.' In July she attempted to surprise him in his palace but, warned in time, as she entered Winchester by one gate he passed out by another. She took up her abode in the royal castle, and thither came presently her brother Robert, her uncle David of Scotland, and the Earls of Hereford and Chester. For seven weeks Winchester was the scene of a strange conflict. Maud from her castle besieged the palace of

the bishop, which, as usual, was strongly fortified; the bishop's men, for military purposes, burnt the houses near the palace; and soon the bishop himself, with Stephen's queen and a powerful body of Londoners arrived, and besieged the besiegers in the castle. The townsmen suffered from both parties alike, and so large a part of the city was burnt, that no fewer than forty churches and two abbeys perished. A failure of provisions at last compelled Maud and her partizans either to surrender or to fly. She resolved to attempt escape on a Sunday, when fighting would cease, and a less strict watch would be kept. Early in the morning of September 14 she left the castle with an armed escort, and riding as swiftly as possible, took refuge in the castle of Devizes. Her brother, with a band of faithful knights, followed her as a rear guard, who being overtaken at Stourbridge fought obstinately, and were nearly all killed or taken prisoners. Robert was sent to Rochester Castle; the King of Scots ransomed himself and returned home, and the Earl of Hereford alone succeeded in reaching Gloucester Castle. The real leaders of the two parties were now both in confinement, but a brief negotiation led to their liberation, the earl being exchanged for the king. Thus after all the crafty moves, agitations and conflicts of the preceding ten months, the two rivals now stood in the same relative position as they did before the capture of Stephen at Lincoln.

17. In the following month (December) a council was held at Westminster, at which the legate presided, and the king was present. The legate attempted the difficult task of justifying the windings of his course in the civil war, and made one of the glozing speeches in which he was especially skilled. Stephen also spoke, and some unknown voice was heard in defence of Maud and in severe reproach of the legate. The latter heard all without making sign of either shame or anger, and closed the council by excommunicating those who still favoured Maud, or built new castles, or assailed the rights of the Church, or wronged the poor and defenceless. The war meanwhile went wearily on. No great battle was risked, but the land was everywhere harassed with petty conflicts, small sieges, skirmishes, and the firing of defenceless human homes. Nothing was held sacred from the rude touch of war; churches were commonly turned into fortresses, and fosses were dug in the burial-grounds. Large numbers of foreign

mercenaries were engaged on both sides, and the open triumph of iniquity wrung from the helpless victims the bitter cry that 'Christ and his saints had fallen asleep.' Early in 1142 Maud took up her abode in Oxford, Stephen had a serious attack of illness, and Robert went to Normandy to seek assistance from Geoffrey.<sup>1</sup> While Robert was carrying on his negotiations, which lasted several months, and ended in failure, Stephen recovered and formed the siege of Oxford, resolved to get possession at last of his rival, who had already twice escaped his hands. He routed the garrison who marched out to meet him, entered the town and set fire to it, and immediately invested the castle, in which Maud had taken refuge. The siege lasted nearly three months (September to December). During that time Robert returned to England, bringing the young Henry with him, but Stephen would not be drawn away from Oxford. Once more the prospect of famine drove the empress to clandestine flight. In the first hours of the morning of December 20, the ground white with snow and the Thames frozen over, she passed out of the castle, escorted by three knights, arrayed in white; passed silently and unseen between the posts of the enemy, crossed the frozen river, continued the journey on foot as far as Abingdon, and there finding horses went on more rapidly to Wallingford. She was soon joined by her brother and her son with a large force. Oxford Castle surrendered to the king the day after her flight.

18. A battle was fought at Wilton in July 1143, in which the Earl of Gloucester defeated Stephen, and the king, with his brother the legate, narrowly escaped capture. But this affair scarcely affected the position of the two parties, which were still almost evenly balanced. Maud, who had settled at Gloucester, was nominal sovereign in the western parts of the kingdom; Stephen in the eastern; but the actual authority of each of them was very narrowly limited. No noteworthy military event is recorded during the next three or four years. In 1146 Maud lost by death her most trusted adherent, the Earl of Hereford, and her brother, the Earl of Gloucester; and in the spring of 1147 her son, who had been placed for safety in Bristol Castle, returned to Normandy. The heart of the high-spirited woman

<sup>1</sup> He was then engaged in the reduction of Normandy.

failed her; and at last, after so many audacious attempts, so many astonishing escapes, such fluctuations of hope and despair, she left England and retired to Normandy. Stephen was still surrounded by enemies, and as he now avowedly set himself to lessen the power of the barons, whether by force or by treachery, their hostility grew fiercer. With their enmity was joined that of the clergy, which was also intensified by fresh provocations. At the instigation of the Bishop of Winchester, who had before this time (1148) been deprived of the legatine authority, the king refused the primate, Theobald, permission to attend the Council of Rheims. The primate, however, went to the council, and on his return to Canterbury was banished the kingdom. A sentence of interdict, which he soon after published against the king's demesnes, which involved the closing of churches and the suspension of all the services of religion, alarmed Stephen and compelled him to come to terms with the primate (1149). The quarrel broke out again in 1151. At a synod held in London Stephen demanded that his eldest son, Eustace, should be recognised and crowned as his successor. Theobald, acting as he declared on the instructions of the Pope, refused to do it, alleging that Stephen had acquired the crown by usurpation, and could not transmit it to his son. This defiance of his will threw the king into a rage, and he ordered the arrest of the bishops and the seizure of their possessions. But the storm of passion passed away, and peace was again made.

19. The advance of Henry, the son of Maud, towards manhood, and the successive additions to his dominions, the details of which will be given in the next chapter, were observed by Stephen with growing alarm. In 1152 the Earl of Chester, who in the previous year had been imprisoned by Stephen and deprived of his castles at Lincoln and other places, passed into Normandy to invite Henry to England to establish his claim to the throne. After a short delay, occasioned by a threatening advance of a French army to the frontier of Normandy, Henry came with a small army of knights and infantry. Stephen marched from London to meet him, and the armies lay for two days on opposite sides of the Thames at Wallingford. By the urgent persuasions of many of the nobles on both sides, a truce was agreed to, which was followed after a few months by a treaty of peace. The way was smoothed for an arrangement by the death, in the interval, of

Stephen's son, Eustace. The treaty was negotiated by the primate and the Bishop of Winchester, and its principal terms were the following :—That Stephen should keep the crown during his life ; that he should adopt Henry as his son and successor, and give him the kingdom after his death ; that Henry should do homage to Stephen, and Stephen's son William to Henry ; and that all the possessions of Stephen before he became king should be secured to William. The transaction was brought to a close by a great symphony of oaths and acts of homage to the present and the future king ; and a record was made in the form of a royal charter, attested by the prelates and barons. Stephen and Henry, friends new-sworn, then visited in company the cities of Winchester, London, and Oxford, and the rejoicings of the people showed themselves in the customary processions and acclamations. At Easter they parted, and Henry returned to his duchy. Stephen, having set his house in order, left it in a few months to be occupied and enjoyed by another. His queen Maud had died three years before at the monastery of Faversham, and was buried there. Stephen died at Dover or Canterbury, on the 25th of October, 1154, in the fiftieth year of his age.

## CHAPTER IX.

## HENRY II. (1154-1164.)

1. WITH Henry II. begins the long line of the *Plantagenet* or Angevin sovereigns of England, whose rule lasted for three hundred and thirty years. The eldest son of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, by his wife Maud, the Empress, who was the daughter of Henry I. by his English wife Eadgyth (Maud), the niece of Eadgar the Ætheling, Henry II. was by his mother's side the great-grandson of the Norman Conqueror, and thus in his veins ran mingled the blood of the Angevin, Norman, and Old English sovereign houses. Born in Maine in 1133, he was brought to England at the age of ten, and for some years, during the civil war between his mother and Stephen, he remained in the charge of his uncle Robert, Earl of Gloucester, in Bristol Castle. To his uncle he was indebted for an education superior to that of most princes of that age. After the death of the earl, Henry returned with his mother to Normandy. At the age of sixteen he visited Scotland with a splendid retinue; and at Carlisle, then the seat of the Scottish court, he received the honour of knighthood from his great-uncle, David. On that occasion he became personally known to a large number of the English, Scottish, and Norman nobles, who attended the ceremony, and on whom his handsome person, his knightly virtues, and his superior abilities and culture made a deep and favourable impression. In 1150, after his return to Normandy, the duchy was ceded to him by his father, and he received investiture at the hands of Louis VII. In the following year, by the death of Geoffrey, he became reigning Count of Anjou, and in 1152, by his marriage with Eleanor of Poitou, who was many years older than himself and the divorced queen of Louis VII., he became master of the vast duchy of Aquitaine (or Guienne) and of the county of Poitou. His dominions then included the whole coast-line of France between Dieppe and Bayonne, with the exception of Bretagne, and were of



far greater extent than those of his feudal superior, the king of France. We have seen how this aggrandizement of the young prince influenced the rival parties in England, and have narrated his visit to England, and the treaty which followed. Succeeding, in accordance with the arrangement then made, to the crown of England on the death of Stephen in 1154, Henry became the most powerful prince of his time.

2. At the time of Stephen's death, Henry was occupied in the siege of a castle in Normandy. Confident in the strength of the party favourable to him, he did not at once hasten to his new kingdom, but first completed the task he had undertaken. After due preparations were made for the voyage, he went to Barfleur to embark with his queen and a large retinue for England. Unfavourable winds and weather detained him there for several weeks. Arriving in England on the 6th of December, Henry and Eleanor entered together the city of Winchester, and there received the homage of the nobility. On the 19th of the same month the ceremony of their coronation took place in the abbey of Westminster. Theobald, the primate, placed the crowns on their heads, in the presence of a crowd of both English and foreign nobles, and an immense number of English people, who all rejoiced together and made the abbey ring with their shouts. The English pleased themselves with the thought that English blood ran in the veins of their brave young king, and the pleasure was indistinguishable from hope. So easy it was to forget that not many years before his mother, notwithstanding her English blood, had made herself so hateful to them that they had driven her away. Court pageantries and popular rejoicings went on for some days, but the energetic and provident king lost no time in applying himself to the most pressing duties of government. There was enough needing to be done to improve the state of the country, and a clear head and a strong hand could now undertake and do it. Much must be swept away, much must be amended, much must be newly begun and established, to make England a united, orderly, and progressive state.

3. A great council was at once assembled, in which the king appointed the usual great officers of the crown. In a second council he formally promised to his subjects the enjoyment of the rights and liberties conceded to them by the charter of his grand-

father, Henry I., and in a third the oath of fealty was taken by the barons, temporal and spiritual, to his two sons, William and Henry, both young children. For the removal of the abuses which had cursed the nation during the anarchy of Stephen's reign, the king appointed the Earl of Leicester grand justiciary of the kingdom, investing him at the same time with more extensive authority than his predecessors had exercised. Among the things which it was essential to sweep away at the very outset were the foreign mercenaries, the debased coins, and the castles recently built. Flemings and Brabançons had come over in crowds during the civil war, eager to fight on either side if thereby they might put money in their purses. Many of them had been made barons or earls, and had got possession of estates and castles. Amidst the general joy they were all commanded to leave the kingdom by a certain day, under penalty of death. The debased coinage must be got rid of, and a new coinage of standard weight and purity was issued to take its place. Hardest task of all it was to make riddance of the new castles and at the same time to reclaim for the crown those which formed part of its ancient demesne, but which had been granted away to the adherents of Stephen or of Maud.

4. The king's first step in this difficult matter was to obtain the sanction of the nobles; and for this purpose he convoked a great council. He stated to them his determination, and argued its necessity in order to maintain the dignity of the crown, the fixed revenues of which were then almost wholly drawn from the demesne lands. The council gave its sanction, and the young king put himself at the head of a large army, without the aid of which it would be impossible to carry out his plan. The operations extended over several years. The reclamation of royal demesnes was made with rigorous impartiality, without regard either to the distinction between those granted away by Stephen and those conceded by Maud, or to the position of the new holders as adherents of the one or the other. It is said that in all about 1,100 castles were razed to the ground, to the joy of the people who had been the hapless and helpless victims of the dwellers in these 'dens of thieves.' Among the first which fell were the six strong fortresses of Henry, Bishop of Winchester, who thought it safest to quit England immediately on the accession of the Angevin king. He carried off his rich treasures, and retired to

Clugny. Some of the castles were surrendered without resistance, others held out till they were stormed or till famine threatened the garrisons. Hugh Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, in the marches of Wales, obstinately refused the cession of his castles of Bridgenorth, Cleobury, and Wigmore, and they were taken by force. At the siege of the first of these the king's life was in imminent peril. An arrow was aimed at him from the walls, and in a moment Hubert de St. Clair threw himself in front of the king and received the arrow in his own breast. The faithful vassal presently died in the king's arms. The Earl of Nottingham was driven into exile; the Earl of Albemarle, by the loss of the castle of Scarborough, was reduced from the position of an almost independent sovereign in Yorkshire to that of a controllable vassal; Gloucester Castle was taken from the Earl of Hereford; William, Stephen's son, and Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, had to give up their castles; and in 1157 the Scots were compelled to retire from the three northern counties, so long held by them, Malcolm being at the same time confirmed in his possession of the earldom of Huntingdon. Thus had the king rooted out from the land a multitude of petty tyrants, who each in his own district harassed and oppressed the people, and who by union could at any time seriously threaten the royal authority.

5. In the second year of his reign (1156), Henry breaking off for a while from these expeditions in England, passed into France, in consequence of the invasion of Anjou and Maine by his younger brother Geoffrey. Henry had succeeded his father Geoffrey as Count of Anjou, but the latter by his will gave the county to his younger son in case Henry should become king of England. He had also provided, it is said, that his body should not be buried till Henry had sworn to carry out the secret dispositions of his will. This he reluctantly did, and then sent an embassy to the Pope to obtain absolution from the oath. This strange tale rests on very doubtful evidence and is not generally believed. It is certain, however, that Henry passed over into France, did homage to Louis for his vast territories, including Anjou, and that with the consent of Louis he marched into Anjou, took the principal fortress in the possession of his brother, and compelled him to resign his claims for a large pension. Geoffrey took refuge in Bretagne and soon after accepted the earldom of Nantes,

offered to him by the citizens. Henry made a progress through Poitou and Aquitaine with great pomp and display, and held a council at Bordeaux, at which his chief vassals renewed their fealty to him. That Henry did send an embassy to Rome at the time mentioned is certain; but its avowed and adequate object was to bear the congratulations of the English king and the English nation to the first (and only) English Pope. Nicholas Breakspeare was elected to the papacy the same month that Henry II. was crowned King of England. He took the title of Adrian IV. John of Salisbury, a learned monk, accompanied the embassy, and it appears to have been on this occasion that he was employed to obtain the sanction of the Pope for the king's meditated conquest of Ireland. Plausible pretexts for it were assigned, and the Pope assented to the request. But the expedition was deferred, and the letter of Adrian lay forgotten for years in the archives at Winchester.

6. After Henry's return from Aquitaine in 1157 he undertook an expedition into Wales, which was as full as usual of internal strifes and divisions, and as turbulent on its borders as ever. During the civil war between Stephen and Maud, the raids and depredations of the Welsh had gone unchecked. Henry resolved that it should be so no longer. As the Welsh chiefs gave scornful answer to his demand for compensation, he marched with a large force into Flintshire. Owain Gwynedd, prince of North Wales, refusing to meet the invader in the open country, kept within the shelter of the hills and forests, and a detachment of the English army advanced into the difficult pass of Coleshill. There the Welsh suddenly fell upon them and threw them into confusion. Panic and flight followed, and the slaughter was great. Among the first who fell were Eustace Fitz-John and Roger de Courcy. It was rumoured that the king himself was slain. The Earl of Essex, hereditary standard-bearer of England, threw down the royal banner and fled, and the rout was only checked by the personal bravery of the king. He forced his way to Rhuddlan, and ordered his fleet to make a descent on Anglesey. The seamen landed and ravaged the island, but were suddenly attacked by the inhabitants and most of them killed. After a few weeks unmarked by any noteworthy encounter or exploit, the war was terminated by a formal submission of Owain, who restored certain territories recently taken, did homage, and gave hostages for his fidelity. In

the following year all the princes of South Wales except Rhys ab Gruffydd made their submission to Henry. Six years after this expedition the Earl of Essex, accused by Robert de Montfort of cowardice and treason at the battle of Coleshill, was put to his trial by wager of battle and beaten; but his life was spared by the king, who confiscated his estates and made him a monk at Reading Abbey. After the king's return from this war he was crowned a second time at Worcester, on Christmas Day, 1157.

7. The death of Geoffrey, Henry's brother, took place in 1158, within a year of his resignation of Anjou for a pension, and of his acceptance of the governorship of Nantes. This city, with its territory, one of the most civilised and wealthy parts of Bretagne, then returned to its former dependence as part of the county or duchy. Conan, the reigning duke, was also Earl of Richmond in England. Henry, always grasping after wider dominion, eager to include Bretagne in his French territories, and like other conquerors and acquirers, not scrupulous as to the means of accomplishing his ends, now set up a ridiculous claim to Nantes, as heir to his brother. Nor did he lose time in discussion. He made haste to establish his claim by the argument of the sword. He treated Conan as a usurper, and confiscated his English earldom; treated the men of Nantes as rebels, and at the head of his army enforced submission, and took possession of the town and the neighbouring territory between the Loire and the Vilaine. He then concluded a treaty with Conan, the effect of which would be to make Henry master of the whole of Bretagne on Conan's death, and a marriage was arranged between Geoffrey, Henry's youngest son, then eight years old, and Constantine, Conan's daughter, a child of five years old. The anger and alarm created at the French court by this encroachment and the treaty with Conan were allayed by the wily tongue of Henry's magnificent Chancellor, Thomas Becket, who was sent to Paris. The king followed him thither, and the neutrality of Louis was secured by a contract of marriage between Henry, Henry's eldest surviving son, and Margaret, the infant daughter of Louis.

8. This lull did not last long. Paper treaties are swiftly rent, and politic marriage bonds easily broken in the collision of personal interests and political ambitions. A new claim put forward by Henry in 1159—a mere pretence without foundation, a

shadow of a shadowy claim on the part of his queen, Eleanor, to the duchy of Toulouse—gave rise to a new war. Louis of France, the former husband of Eleanor, had unsuccessfully set up the same claim, and attempted the conquest of the duchy. Henry now demanded its surrender to him, and collected a large army of mercenaries. On this occasion, by the advice of his Chancellor, the king commuted the personal service of his vassals for a fixed sum, a precedent which led the way, by long and slow steps, to the fall of the feudal system. This plan was convenient both to the king and to his vassals; for he could retain his mercenaries for a longer period than his vassals were allowed to serve, and they in turn were glad to avoid the evils of absence from their estates. The King of Scots, the King of Aragon, one of the Welsh princes, and some of the Norman and English barons, took part in the expedition. Conspicuous perhaps above all was the Chancellor, at the head of 700 knights and men-at-arms, raised at his own expense. Although in deacon's orders he showed himself, like Henry of Winchester, a gallant soldier, ever foremost in all perilous enterprises. The first event of the campaign was the capture of Cahors, whence the army advanced upon the city of Toulouse. The French king hastened to its defence, and succeeded in entering with reinforcements. Henry's prudent reluctance to set an example of a vassal making war on his lord led him to reject the counsel of Becket, who would have made an immediate assault. The arrival of another body of French troops rendered the capture of the city hopeless, and therefore Henry, leaving Becket to secure what had been won, returned with most of his army to Normandy. The Chancellor soon joined him there with a still larger number of knights, maintained at his own cost, to fight against the French on the frontier of the duchy. A truce, however, was soon agreed to at an interview with the two kings, and a formal treaty of peace was concluded in October 1160. Within a month war was renewed. Louis, whose queen had just died, had no son, and he almost immediately married Adelais, niece of King Stephen, thus connecting himself with a family avowedly hostile to Henry. The latter, by way of retaliation, secretly got authority from the Pope for the immediate marriage of his son Henry and Margaret of France. Margaret had been placed in charge of one of the barons of Normandy, and three castles in the Vexin, which formed her portion, were entrusted to the keeping

of the Knight's Templars till the marriage should take place. It was now celebrated, and the Templars gave up the castles to Henry. The war was soon closed by another peace (July 1161), arranged by the aid of Peter of Tarantaise, agent in France of Pope Alexander III. Alexander, at this time an exile from Italy, was received as the true Pope by France and England, while Rome was in the possession of a rival Pope, Victor IV., who was supported by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. At Courcy sur Loire the two kings met him, and on foot, one on each side holding his bridle, conducted him to his abode.

9. Thus, for a time, were all those confused cross claims, territorial wars, futile negotiations, and treaties for marriages of unconseious children, hushed and ended, and tranquillity was permitted to all the subjects of Henry's rule. But the stillness was soon to be broken by a storm, which burst suddenly from an apparently cloudless sky. A strife was to begin of vaster import, a conflict not of persons, nor of nations, but of classes; a war not for territory and temporal dominion, but for ideas and principles. It was to be fought in England, but its real field was no narrower than Christendom. The conspicuous champions of the conflicting principles were to be England's King and England's Primate: but the real parties were the temporal and spiritual powers, the Empire and the Papacy, Church and State, the Priesthood and the People. The question which was raised and must be answered, involved the position, authority, and privileges of the hierarchy. Its stupendous assumptions must be criticised, its jurisdiction and privileges distinctly defined, and its relations to civil government determined and adjusted.

10. Our brief narrative of this momentous struggle must be introduced by some account of the extraordinary man who plays the part of champion of the hierarchy. Thomas Becket, according to the testimony of a contemporary biographer, was of Norman descent.<sup>1</sup> His father, Gilbert, was a merchant of Rouen, who, with his wife, a native of Caen, settled in London, where he carried on his business and served, it is said, the office of sheriff. In London Thomas was born, in the year 1118. After the murder—or martyrdom—and canonization of Becket, a rapid and rich overgrowth of glorifying legends concealed the simple

<sup>1</sup> There appears to be no authority for the opinion maintained by Lord Lyttleton and M. Thierry, that Becket was of Saxon (i.e. English) origin.

facts of his birth and parentage. His father Gilbert was depicted as a bold crusader, who was taken captive in the Holy Land and won the passionate love of his master's daughter. She aided his escape from captivity, and then, led by her love, followed him to Europe, and at last reached London. Two words only of the English language were familiar to her, 'London' and 'Gilbert.' With the name of Gilbert ever on her lips, she searched the streets of the great city, met Gilbert's servant, and was conducted to his house. She submitted to baptism, took the name of Matilda, and was married to her knight at St. Paul's. The tale, like so many others strewn over the pages of history, is pretty and fascinating, but it is not true. If it were true, the fact that it was nevertheless entirely unknown to all the contemporary biographers of Becket, his personal friends and attendants, would be more marvellous than the tale itself.<sup>1</sup> Placed in his boyhood under the care of the monks of Merton, he studied afterwards in London, and was trained in business there, completing his education in the schools of Paris. His extraordinary abilities were early recognised, and with them he enjoyed the advantage of great personal beauty and a singularly attractive manner.

11. The first step in his path of advancement was his entrance into the household of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the least worldly of the prelates of the time. Once he accompanied Theobald to Rome, and afterwards studied the canon law at Bologna and Auxerre. On the elevation of the archdeacon Roger, who had been jealous of Becket's influence, to the see of York, Becket obtained the lucrative archdeaconry. Other rich preferments were given him by the primate, who held him in the highest esteem and entrusted to him various difficult negotiations with the court of Rome, his successful conduct of which won him the favour of the empress Maud and of her son Henry. Through the influence of the primate, Becket was made chancellor of the kingdom two years after the accession of Henry. This office, which did not then carry with it any judicial authority, gave him the highest civil position in the realm next to the king's, and as keeper of the king's seal his power was very extensive. The primate hoped that the influence of Becket as chief adviser of the king would check or counteract the already manifest hostility of Henry to the priesthood. At the same time Becket was ap-

<sup>1</sup> Seven contemporary biographies of Becket are extant.



pointed preceptor to the heir to the crown, warden of the Tower of London, and lord of the castle of Berkhamstead and the honour of Eye. He was now in deacon's orders, but in his way of life the churchman was far less seen than the courtier, the knight, and the statesman. He was the constant and intimate companion of the king, the credit of whose wisest measures was attributed to his counsels. His vast power was matched by his enormous wealth, and a princely magnificence in house and equipage and hospitality. The death of Theobald in April 1161 left the primacy of Canterbury vacant. General expectation pointed to the chancellor as destined to succeed to it, but for more than a year the see was left vacant, and its revenues appropriated by the king. At last (May 1162) Becket was elected on the recommendation or command of the king. He made some show of reluctance which was easily overcome, and thus attained, as chancellor and primate, the chief power in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. While Archbishop Theobald had hoped that Becket's devotion to the interests of the Church would determine the course of the king, the king on the other hand naturally hoped that Becket's devotion and obligation to him would lead him heartily to co-operate in the measures he was already meditating for restricting the claims of the Church. At Whitsuntide Becket was ordained priest, and was then consecrated archbishop by Henry of Winchester, who had by this time done with his battles and sieges and was going peacefully to his end.

12. The epoch of Becket's elevation to the primacy was marked by a total change in his outward life. His morals had always been unimpeached. He now laid aside all that pertained to the knight and the courtier, and the gay man of the world; changed his dress, his diet, his books, and his daily companions. After having astonished men by his pomp and magnificence, he now astonished them equally by his asceticism and his passionate devotions. The hours of the day not occupied with the duties of his station were spent in grave studies, in the society of monks, in almsgiving, and in all monkish self-mortifications. The sarcastic jest of the bold, learned, and severe Bishop of London, Gilbert Foliot, was more than justified: 'The king has wrought a miracle: he has turned a soldier and a layman into an archbishop.' In pursuance of his resolution to cast off all merely secular engagements, Becket soon resigned the chan-

cellorship, and thus completely separated himself from his old official as well as familiar intercourse with the king. This step was a surprise and an offence to Henry, and might easily give rise to suspicions and evil forebodings. He was in France at the time, and on his return to England did not conceal his displeasure. In May 1163 Becket attended the Council of Tours, held by Pope Alexander III., some of the canons of which severely condemned encroachments on church property. Soon after his return, the contest with the king began. At an assembly at Woodstock, the king decreed that the Danegeld should be paid to his own exchequer: the primate vehemently opposed the decree, and swore that the tax should never be levied on his lands. He was determined to assert the prerogatives and reclaim the lost possessions of his see. The right of presentation to the rectory of Eynsford in Kent was disputed between the lord of the manor and the archbishop. The nominee of the latter being ejected by the lord, sentence of excommunication was issued against the ejector, in violation of the known rule that the king's tenants in chief should not be excommunicated without his consent. Becket defied the royal order to recall the sentence, but afterwards reluctantly yielded.

13. These particular disputes were merely the skirmishes which preceded the battle. This soon began, and raged violently, on the question of the exemption of all clerks, from the highest prelate to the lowest member of the clerical body, from the jurisdiction of the secular courts. No matter what crimes he committed, any man who could boast that he wore the smallest rag of clerical vesture claimed to be tried only by the church courts. It was not a speculative but a most practical question, for the evils of the existing state of things were enormous. It was stated that some of the clergy were devils in guilt, but that they escaped with ridiculously inadequate punishment. The only penalties which could be inflicted by the ecclesiastical tribunals were whipping, imprisonment, and degradation from office. It was well known that some great clerical criminals had found a protector in the primate, and he had not the whole of the clergy on his side in this contest. Opposed to him was a man of strong will, of undaunted courage, of awful severity—a king pre-eminent among the sovereigns of his time, in wealth, dominion, and military force. The first public act in the great drama was the

holding of a great council or parliament at Westminster, at which the king made formal complaint of the abuses of the spiritual courts, and demanded that all clerical criminals should be given up to the civil authorities and be dealt with according to the law of the land. He insisted on an immediate answer, refusing Becket even a day's delay. Becket was inflexible. To the king's question whether the bishops would observe the customs of the realm, he replied, 'Saving my order.' So said they all, with the exception of the Bishop of Chichester, who agreed and made no reservation. The king, in a sudden rage, left the hall and quitted London the next day. Becket was deprived of the governorship of the royal castles and of the charge of Prince Henry.

14. Before the close of the year (1163) Becket yielded to the urgent persuasions of the prelates, and, waiting on the king at Woodstock, offered to make the promise without reserve. The king received him graciously. To bring the matter to an end with becoming solemnity, a great council was held (January 1164) at Clarendon, one of the royal palaces, near Salisbury. That nothing might be left vague and disputable, the 'customs' to be observed were now presented in clear technical form, in sixteen separate statutes, all of them limiting the immunities of the clergy. Once more the primate desired to add the saving clause, and the king flew into a rage. Some of the prelates, and two Knights Templars, on their knees prayed the primate to relent. He then took the required oath without reserve, and his example was followed by all the bishops. According to one account, threats of violence and the sight of a band of knights with drawn swords contributed to bring about this result. The Constitutions of Clarendon, feudal both in their spirit and their form, were so comprehensive in their scope that they virtually gave a new constitution to the English Church and State. The prelates were to be subject to the crown equally with the lay barons; vacant sees were to be granted according to the king's will; the clergy were to be subject in common with the laity to the laws of the land; the king's justices were to decide, in suits to which a clerk was a party, whether the case belonged to the civil or the ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and the ultimate appeal from all church courts was to be the king.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It has been pointed out by Dean Milman (*Hist. Lat. Christianity*, vol. iii. p. 465, ed. of 1854) that neither party to this dispute made any reference to the statute of the Conqueror on the subject.

15. Three copies of the Constitutions were made, one for each of the archbishops, and one for the archives of the kingdom. They were subscribed and sealed by the king; the nobles, and all the prelates except Becket. Although he had taken the oath, he obstinately refused to sign and seal. He left the council sorrowful and perplexed, and on his return to Canterbury, in the bitterness of self-censure for his weak concession, inflicted severe chastisement on himself, and abstained from the discharge of his ecclesiastical functions. He sent an account of the matter to the Pope, and asked his advice and absolution from the oath. This placed Alexander in a very difficult position; and he was still further embarrassed by the king's demand at the same time for a commission as legate to the Archbishop of York, and a recommendation to Becket to observe the customs. Swayed by conflicting desires and fears, the Pope sent the absolution to Becket, and the legatine commission to Roger of York. The latter insulted Becket by having his cross borne before him in the province of Canterbury, and the Pope, to whom Becket complained, advised caution and promised that he would not permit the see of Canterbury to be subject to another. The enemies of Becket were now numerous; some of them were in the confidence of the king, and by evil reports added to his already vehement resentment. To escape from the strife, Becket attempted secretly to pass over to France, but weather prevented him. He then had an interview with the king, which had no results. In October (1164) a great council was held at Northampton, and Becket was cited to appear before it. On the first charge brought against him he was declared guilty of contempt of the king and denial of justice, and was fined 500*l*. Successive claims were made, on which judgment went against him, and at last an account was demanded of all monies received from vacant abbacies and bishoprics during his chancellorship. The sum due to the crown was set down at 44,000 marks. Becket was astonished at this unexpected claim, and asked for delay. He consulted the other prelates, whose counsels were various. The stress of anxiety brought on an illness, and for two days he was confined to his rooms.

16. On Tuesday (Oct. 18) he celebrated, out of its course, the mass of St. Stephen, the first martyr.<sup>1</sup> He then rode in his

<sup>1</sup> The service begins with the words 'Princes sat and took counsel against me.'

full state to the royal residence, entered the hall bearing the cross in his own hands, and sat down among the bishops. The king, enraged at this significant action, which meant defiance of himself, retired to another room, whither the bishops followed him. Some of them had attempted by force to take the cross out of Becket's hands. As he sat alone in the hall, still holding it, his enemy Roger of York, with his cross borne before him, passed by to the king. Grave debate took place in the Council. Becket defied the king, and announced his appeal to the Pope. He also inhibited his suffragans to sit in judgment in a secular council on their metropolitan. He was found guilty of perjury and treason. When Robert Earl of Leicester appeared in the hall to read the sentence to him, he interrupted him, and again appealing to the Pope, said, 'Under the protection of the Catholic Church and the Apostolic See I depart.' He passed slowly, amidst murmurs and insults, out of the hall. The streets were thronged, and the people eagerly sought his blessing. He asked leave of the king to quit England; the answer was deferred till the next day. In the dead of night he rose from his bed, which had been laid before the altar of St. Andrew's church, and, accompanied only by two monks and a servant, stole out of the town. He made for the coast, and travelling chiefly by night in the disguise of a monk, he reached the coast near Deal in a week; after a week's stay there he crossed the Channel, taking with him his pall and his official seal, and landed in Flanders, near Gravelines. He was sure of a favourable reception from Louis of France and from the Pope, who was then residing at Sens, for he had been secretly corresponding with both. Meanwhile the king despatched ambassadors to the Count of Flanders, Louis, and Alexander, and they crossed the Channel on the same day with Becket. In their journeys in France they were in peril of their lives, so strong was the popular admiration of Becket, while his progress was like a triumphal procession. He had a public audience of the Pope at Sens, at which he obtained the Pope's condemnation of the Constitutions of Clarendon. He was also re-invested with the primacy, which he had resigned into the hands of the Pope. His place of refuge for a time was to be in the abbey of Pontigny, in Burgundy.

## CHAPTER X.

HENRY II. (1165-1189.)

1. THE Primate of England had found a resting-place at Pontigny. The great controversy was far from ended, but for a little while the king's attention was called to other pressing matters. A dispute with Louis required his presence in Normandy, and there the news reached him of a general rising in Wales. An outbreak in 1163 had been quelled by an English army, which had afterwards ravaged Carmarthenshire. The insurrection of 1164 was more general and more formidable. Castle after castle fell before the fierce mountaineers, and at last they overran the Marches. Henry hastened from Normandy, and with a large force, hastily collected, of English and foreigners, he marched against them (1165). According to their wont, they retreated to their mountain fastnesses, woods, and defiles. Henry followed them, defeated them on the banks of the Cieroc, and again followed them to the foot of the hill of Berwin. The Welsh swarmed on the heights. Storms, with floods of rain, made the king's position in the valley untenable, and, returning in disorder, not without loss of baggage, he reached Chester. Smarting under the disgrace of his failure, he covered himself with infamy by a deed of cruelty as atrocious as any recorded of those cruel times. At the close of his campaign in 1157 he had received some hostages, children of the noblest Welsh families. On these he now let fall his vengeance by giving orders for the eyes of the males to be plucked out, and for the noses and ears of the females to be cut off. The troops were then disbanded, and the king returned to London. The Welsh confederacy was soon after broken up.

2. Henry was more successful in a continental campaign which presently followed. An insurrection broke out in Bretagne against Conan, the titular count or duke, but in reality the *protégé* and puppet of Henry. The king entered the duchy (1166) for the

professed purpose of supporting the legitimate duke against his rebellious subjects, and captured and garrisoned Dol and other towns. Many of the Bretons, who had suffered greatly from the cruelties of the nobles, and from the incompetency of Conan for the task of government, rallied to the king. Conan was induced to resign his possessions and rights nominally to his daughter Constantia, but in fact to Henry, whose third son, Geoffrey, was espoused to Constantia, the government being placed in the king's hands as guardian of the children. Two years later the Bretons again revolted, and were joined by their neighbours, the men of Maine. Louis of France gave them promises of aid, but nothing more. Henry marched in person against the insurgents, totally defeated them, demolished many of the castles, broke the power of the barons, and secured to the duchy peace, regular administration of justice, and outward prosperity.

3. After Henry's return from his unsuccessful expedition in Wales, full of the bitterness of failure, and perhaps of remorse for the ferocious cruelties which he had perpetrated on the hostages, tidings were brought to him of the enthusiasm and reverence with which the exile of Canterbury was welcomed in France. In his wrath he ordered the seizure of the revenues of the archbishopric, and the sequestration of the estates of the clergy who had followed Becket to France, or had aided him with money. He forbade public prayers for him and correspondence with him, and suspended the payment of Peter's Pence. This was not enough. With relentless and inexcusable cruelty he ordered the banishment of all the kinsfolk of Becket, old and young, with their friends and servants. This edict, it is said, drove four hundred persons, in the depth of winter, from their homes and their country. To aggravate their sufferings, an oath was imposed on all adults to visit the archbishop, that he might see their miserable state. This was rigorously enforced, and the cell of the exile at Pontigny was day after day beset by these exiles. Their case excited general commiseration, and in the monasteries of France and Flanders they found shelter and hospitality. Becket assumed the dress of the Cistercians, to whom Pontigny belonged, and adopted all the austerities of the order. His health gave way, and insane dreams possessed his brain, but the remonstrances of his friends and the dictates of common sense were disregarded.

4. The king, indignant at the support given to Becket by Pope Alexander, entered into negotiations with the Emperor, and embraced, it is asserted, the cause of the new Antipope, Guido of Crema, who took the title of Paschal III. An oath of abjuration of Pope Alexander was exacted from every male above twelve years old in the kingdom. But the fortunes of Alexander changed for the better, and the policy of Henry adapted itself to the change. In 1165 Becket audaciously, and with studied insult, thrice cited the king to receive his censure. In the following year, having secretly obtained from the Pope a legatine commission in England (the province of York excepted), he assumed a haughtier attitude and struck a more daring blow. He formed his purpose secretly, and prepared himself for carrying it out by special acts of devotion. On Ascension Day (2nd June) he appeared in the ancient church of Vezelai, and from its pulpit, in the presence of a crowded congregation, annulled the Constitutions of Clarendon, and excommunicated all who had counselled, observed, enforced, or defended them; absolved the bishops from their oaths to observe them, and then excommunicated by name his principal adversaries, except the king. Henry was ill at the time at Chinon, in Anjou. His wrath was excessive, and its signs were like those of madness. Strict guard was ordered to be kept at all the ports to prevent the introduction of documents from the Pope or the prelate; and the most severe penalties were denounced against any one who should bring them. At the same time Henry, by a warning message to the General of the Cistercian Order, had Becket dismissed from Pontigny. The result of this impolitic measure was that Becket exchanged his seclusion for a more prominent and formidable position in the city of Sens. This gave rise to a short war with the King of France, which was renewed in the following year (1167 and 1168). A confused correspondence went on during the same period between the several parties to the strife; an embassy was sent by Henry to Rome, and Becket was suspended from his official functions. The Pope appointed two legates to hear and decide the cause in France. They were William of Pavia and Cardinal Otho. They reached France in the autumn of 1167, and in November held their court near Gisors. After warm debate the decision was suspended for a year, with the consent of the Pope.



5. Anxious to bring about a reconciliation, or willing to attempt it if only to give time, the Pope induced Becket to attend a great meeting in the plains near Montmirail (January 6, 1169), at which the kings of France and England, with their barons, and two mediators sent by the Pope, were present. Becket previously agreed to throw himself on the king's mercy without reserve. But at the decisive moment he added the words 'saving the honour of God.' The meeting broke up in anger and consternation. Reconciliation was plainly impossible. The war between Henry and Louis was soon renewed. On the following Ascension Day Becket excommunicated Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of London, and other chief advisers of the king. Foliot appealed to the Pope. Another legatine commission was issued, the Nuncios being Gratian, a canon lawyer, and Vivian. They had several interviews with the king; but all were inconclusive, king and primate still insisting each on his clause of saving words, and the king inexorably refusing to give the primate the customary 'kiss of peace.' Becket then menaced the kingdom of England with an interdict, and some of the prelates had begun to waver in their adherence to the king. A royal proclamation was issued, with stringent provisions, to guard against the admission of letters from the Pope or the archbishop. The Pope was still temporising, and made another attempt at reconciliation. But by two measures he aroused the wrath of Becket. He authorised the absolution of the Bishops of London and Salisbury, and sent a brief to the Archbishop of York, permitting him to perform the ceremony of coronation of the heir to the throne, the admitted prerogative of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The coronation of Prince Henry took place at Westminster, on the 15th of June, 1170. Within five weeks after this ceremony, which threatened to make a reconciliation more hopeless than ever, peace was formally made between Henry and Becket. The meeting took place at Fretville (July), between Chartres and Tours; the conference was long, the manner of king and primate familiar and agreeable, but all was hollow; each party distrusted the other, and all matters in dispute were passed over in silence.<sup>1</sup>

6. Four months still passed before Becket returned to Eng-

<sup>1</sup> This sudden agreement at Fretville appears to have been the result, on Henry's part, of a suggestion made to him that Becket could better be managed within than without the kingdom.

land. In the meantime the Pope decreed the suspension of the Archbishop of York, and excommunicated several prelates who had taken part in the recent coronation. The king ordered the restoration of his see to him, an order the execution of which was resisted by the barons who held some of the castles and lands, and by the royal officers who were receiving the revenues. The bishops, too, were ready to oppose it. Precautions were taken to seize the Pope's last briefs as soon as Becket should land in England, but he took counter precautions, and sent them over secretly by other hands. They were then publicly placed in the hands of the prelates, who complained bitterly to Becket, and passed over to Normandy to demand justice of the king. The primate landed at Sandwich, where he was roughly dealt with by Randolph de Brose, sheriff of Kent, and other of his enemies. But the country clergy and the country people escorted him with enthusiasm on his way to Canterbury, which he reached on the 3rd of December (1170). After a few days he set out to visit Prince Henry, at Woodstock; but so great was the popular excitement at Rochester and in London, that he was ordered to return to his diocese. He spent the time in the discharge of official duties, in devotions and the practice of monkish austerities. On Christmas Day he preached a furious sermon on the saying 'Peace on earth, good-will towards men,' closing it with a sentence of excommunication against several of his enemies, and a passionate condemnation of the bishops.

7. On Tuesday, December 28, there appeared at Canterbury four knights, chamberlains of the king, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Norville, and Reginald Brito. They collected some troops, and took up their quarters at St. Augustine's Abbey. They had been present at the conference of the bishops with the king at Bayeux, and had heard him exclaim, in a violent rage, 'Is there not one of my cowardly courtiers who will relieve me from the insults of this turbulent priest?' Catching at the suggestion, they instantly left the court for England, resolved not to shrink from bloodshed. The next day (29th) they were admitted to the apartment of the archbishop, on pretence of having a message from the king to him. They made no salutation, nor even acknowledged the reluctant salutation of Becket. Haughty words were addressed to him by Fitz-Urse, which received as haughty a reply. Becket was ordered to absolve

the excommunicated bishops, and gave an evasive answer: he was ordered to leave England with his followers: to this he replied that no power on earth should separate him from his flock. Furious grew the altercation, and at last Fitz-Urse bade all present arrest the archbishop. The knights went out and called for their arms. Becket remained calm in the midst of the uproar which immediately surrounded him. The doors had been closed and fastened, and sounds were heard of an axe by which entrance was to be forced. With reluctance, as the vesper bell was heard, Becket was borne along into the cathedral. He forbade them to close the doors. All his followers had fled and concealed themselves but two, Canon Robert Fitz-Stephen and the cross-bearer, Edward Grim. While Becket was going up the steps towards the high altar, the four knights burst in with several followers. One shouted through the twilight, 'Where is the traitor?' There was no answer. Another shouted, 'Where is the archbishop?' 'Here I am,' said Becket, 'no traitor, but a priest of God.' Another altercation began; a violent struggle followed. In the strength of sudden passion Becket seized and dashed De Tracy on the pavement, and called Fitz-Urse by an insulting name. The first blow was struck by the latter; its force was broken by Grim, but it fell on Becket's head and drew blood. He uttered a pious ejaculation. Successive blows from powerful arms fell on him and brought him to the ground; his skull was broken, and a priest who stood by set his heel on his neck and scattered his brains on the floor. The body lay there, and the murderers hastened away to pillage the palace.

8. 'The assassination of Becket,' says Dean Milman, 'has something appalling, with all its terrible circumstances, seen in the remote past. What was it in its own age? The most distinguished churchman in Christendom, the champion of the great sacerdotal order, almost in the hour of his triumph over the most powerful king in Europe; a man, besides the awful sanctity inherent in the person of every ecclesiastic, of most saintly holiness; soon after the most solemn festival of the Church, in his own cathedral, not only sacrilegiously but cruelly murdered, with every mark of hatred and insult. Becket had all the dauntlessness, none of the meekness, of the martyr; but while his dauntlessness would command boundless admiration, few, if any, would seek the more genuine sign of Christian martyrdom.'

9. The murder of Becket became, in the over-excited imagination of Christendom, a martyrdom; and from the hour when his mangled remains lay at the foot of the altar, the man was a saint, and his body worked miracles. The moment of his fall was that of the victory of his cause. His blood cried from the ground, and a host of sympathies, natural or perverted, rose to avenge the crime. The king, who was in Normandy, on hearing the news, shrank, appalled, into solitude; the Pope, with other feelings than his, did the same. The former, when aroused from his stupor, despatched envoys to Rome, and ordered the arrest of the murderers. The Pope for some days refused audience to the envoys, and was bent on excommunicating the king by name, and of laying all his dominions under an interdict. Moved, however, by the declarations of the king, he made (about Easter, 1171) the excommunication in general terms of the assassins with their abettors, and appointed two legates to take cognizance of the matter. Some time elapsed before their intervention could be carried out; for before their arrival in Normandy the state of affairs in Ireland called for the presence of Henry, and he had gone to add another kingdom, at least nominally, to his vast dominions.

10. The conquest of Ireland had been meditated by the Conqueror in his later years, and the English Chronicler speaks of the project in these words:—‘If he might yet two years have lived, he had Ireland with his wariness won, and that without any weapons.’ The ‘wariness’ showed itself in a careful fostering of the evident willingness on the part of some of the Irish kings and prelates to establish close ecclesiastical relations with England. Two successive archbishops of Dublin were consecrated by Lanfranc and one by Anselm, and some reforms in the Church of Ireland were suggested by the former. A century had passed since the beginning of those transactions, a great-grandson of the Conqueror was on the English throne, in whom the lust of acquisition and dominion was as strong as it was in his great ancestor, and the subjugation of Ireland was at last to be undertaken. The sanction of the Pope had been given to Henry early in his reign, but not till after the termination of the controversy with Becket did he avail himself of the papal brief. Ireland, in the twelfth century, still retained its old division into five kingdoms or provinces, one of its kings possessing a shadowy sove-

reignty over the whole. The early Christian civilisation of the country had been almost wholly lost in the period between the eighth and tenth centuries, when successive bands of Northmen invaded, pillaged, and devastated the island, and established their settlements on the coasts. Since that time the people had lived in an almost barbarous state, unrestrained by the influences of religion, and distracted by family, tribal, and kingly jealousies and quarrels. The attempts made from time to time by the Popes to introduce order, discipline, and morality, had been almost fruitless, so general were the ignorance, the divisions and dissensions, the obstinacy and the turbulence of the people, the chieftains and the kings.

11. It was by dissensions among the kings that the way was at last plainly opened for invasion and subjugation. Dermot, king of Leinster, in consequence of a crime which had brought on him the hostility of O'Ruarc, king of Leitrim, and of Turlogh O'Connor, the king of all Ireland, was expelled from the island. He presented himself to Henry II., who was then (1168) in Aquitaine, did homage to him, and received his permission to enlist any of his subjects in his service. Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Maurice Fitzgerald, agreed to enter into his service. In June 1169, Dermot, aided by Fitz-Stephen, took Wexford, and defeated the Prince of Ossory. In the following year he was joined by Fitzgerald and Raymond, and a few weeks later by Strongbow, with a large body of knights and archers, who landed near Waterford. The town was taken after three assaults, and the conquerors then marching to Dublin, took the city by storm. Dermot dying soon after the capture of Dublin, Strongbow, who had married his daughter Eva and had been named his successor, assumed the crown. Before Strongbow's departure for Ireland, the king had withdrawn his consent to the expedition; and now his jealousy was raised to the highest pitch by the disobedience and the success of the baron. He immediately ordered the return of the invaders, refused an audience to two embassies from Strongbow, and was only pacified by the personal appearance of the Earl and the surrender to himself of Dublin and the surrounding districts. The Earl also agreed to hold the rest of his territories in Ireland as vassal to the king. In October Henry himself landed at Waterford at the head of a large force, and

marched for Dublin. About the same time the Irish bishops, who had previously held a synod at Armagh and enacted that all English slaves should be set free, held another at Cashel, at which the Papal legate presided, and at which Henry was recognized as king. At Dublin he held his court, and received the nominal submission of the chieftains of all the provinces except Ulster. But he made no further territorial conquests, and his real authority was limited to small districts near the English garrisons. Henry remained in Ireland till April 17, 1172, when he entrusted the chief command to Hugh de Lacy.

12. During the five months which the king spent in Ireland it is stated that all intercourse between England and Ireland was suspended, not a single vessel arriving on the Irish coasts. By some writers this is attributed to the same motive as his hasty departure from Normandy—a determination to avoid a meeting with the legates who were sent to Normandy to effect a reconciliation between the king and the Pope. As soon as he heard that the negotiations had taken a more favourable turn, he hastened back to his duchy, and within five weeks the ceremonious reconciliation took place. He appeared before the court of the legates in the cathedral of Avranches, swore on the Gospels that he was innocent in deed and in desire of the death of Becket, and agreed, as his hasty words had been the occasion of the murder, to maintain for a year two hundred knights in the Holy Land; to serve personally, if required, against the Saracens; to abrogate the Constitutions of Clarendon; and to restore to the friends of Becket all their possessions.

13. The tranquillity to which Henry had now attained was soon broken by a rebellion of his sons, instigated by their mother, the Queen Eleanor. Henry, the eldest, had been crowned King of England; but his wife, the daughter of Louis, had not been crowned with him. To satisfy the demand of Louis, the ceremony of Henry's coronation was repeated, and Margaret was crowned at the same time (August 1172). The coronation of the heir to the throne was customary, and did not carry with it any right to present possession of territory or government. But Henry, the young king, demanded immediate possession of England or Normandy; and on receiving a refusal, fled to the French coast (March 1173), whither in a few days his brothers, Richard and Geoffrey, followed him. Their mother

set out to join them, but was seized and placed in confinement. A powerful league in favour of Henry was formed by the King of France, William, King of Scotland, and Philip, Count of Flanders, the earldom of Northumberland being promised to William, and the earldom of Kent to Philip. The king, Henry, at once collected a very large army of adventurers, and sought the friendly support of Pope Alexander. The unnatural war broke out in Normandy in June, raged through the summer, and extended itself to England, ending in both countries unfavourably for the young king. In the spring of 1174 hostilities were renewed in England, in Normandy, and in Aquitaine. The Scots invaded the northern counties, Roger de Mowbray headed a rising in Yorkshire, and other risings took place under Earl Ferrers, David, Earl of Huntingdon, and Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk. At the same time a great fleet was ready for a French invasion of England. Henry, warned by the Bishop of Winchester, suddenly embarked for England.

14. He landed on the 10th of July. His mind was unusually disturbed, and his spirits depressed, by the almost sudden storm of trouble which surrounded him. It was divine judgment for the persecution of the martyr Thomas, said the clergy, and the people easily believed it to be so. The king himself was not inaccessible to the common sentiment. Before marching against his visible enemies with sword and lance, he felt constrained to humble himself before the invisible powers, and regain their favour. On Friday, July 12, after travelling all night, he came within sight of the cathedral towers of Canterbury. He dismounted, and went the remaining three miles' distance barefoot, and in the dress of a penitent. He passed into the cathedral and descended into the crypt, where the body of Becket had been hastily buried, and prostrated himself before the tomb. Becket had been canonized a year previously. Foliot, Bishop of London, preached to the people, assuring them of the king's innocence and explaining the motive of his penance. The king then went to the chapter-house, and again confessing his offence, submitted to be scourged by all the monks. He closed this humiliating process with a night of prayer, and then returned to London. There, overwrought by feeling, exhausted by fatigue and fasting, he fell into a fever, and lay sick for some days.

15. On the very day that saw the king doing penance at

Becket's tomb, his northern barons had won a memorable victory over his enemies, and captured the king of Scots, with many illustrious companions, at Alnwick. The news was brought to Henry in London by a servant of Ranulph de Glanville, who had the captive king in his custody. It was healing and life to him, and he rose from his sick bed to take horse and join his army. But the war was over. The Scots had dispersed, and the rebel earls gave up their castles and made peace. The royal army passed over into Normandy, where, with a very large force, Louis, with the Earl of Flanders, was besieging Rouen. On the 10th of August the citizens were induced, by the proclamation of an armistice by the King of France, to relax their vigilance, and rest from their military toils. The besiegers treacherously took advantage of the truce and assaulted the city, but were repulsed. The next day the English army appeared, the besiegers were besieged, and on the 14th they broke up and began to retreat. A pacification was brought about in a conference at Falaise (September 29). By this compact the three sons of Henry agreed to return to obedience to their father, the conquests on both sides were restored, two castles with certain yearly incomes were assigned to each of the princes, and the prisoners, except the King of Scots, were released. The latter was still confined at Falaise; but on his submission, swearing fealty and doing homage to Henry and his son, the young king, he was set at liberty (December 3). It was agreed, at the same time, that the Scottish clergy should also do homage and swear allegiance, that five castles in Scotland should have English garrisons, and that till these fortresses were given up to Henry he should keep as hostages the brothers of King William and twenty barons. This memorable treaty was ratified at York in August 1175.

16. The two kings, elder and younger,<sup>1</sup> returned to England together in the spring of 1175. Eight years of peace followed, of which there is not much to tell. One of the first incidents of this period was the publication in Ireland of the bull of Pope Adrian, authorising the invasion by Henry. This led to the submission of Róderic, king of Connaught, and other chiefs to him as their feudal over-lord. In 1177, Earl John, the king's youngest son, then only eleven years old, was declared Lord of Ireland, and

<sup>1</sup> *Rex Senior* and *Rex Junior*, as they were called by their contemporaries.



the task of subjugating the country was assigned to several barons and knights, each undertaking a separate district. John did not actually go to Ireland till March 1185, and before the end of the year he had made himself so obnoxious to the Irish by his insolent bearing that he had to return to England. Hugh Lacy had governed as his deputy. In 1176, in a great council held at Northampton, an important step was taken for the better and speedier administration of justice. To avoid the expense and loss of time involved in attendance at the king's court (*aula regis*), which was held wherever the king happened to be, but only at certain periods of the year, the scheme of 'itinerant justices,' which had occasionally been tried in the reign of Henry I., was definitely constituted and made permanent. The country was divided into six districts, nearly coinciding with the circuits of the present time, and three judges were appointed to each of them. The new arrangements, as well as some other legal changes introduced, appear to have had for their primary object the emolument of the king. A beginning was made of another great reform, the suppression of trial by battle, and the introduction in its stead in civil actions of the grand assize, which was a jury of four knights and twelve other persons chosen by them. By one of the laws, or 'assizes,' of Clarendon (1176), trial by jury as a general mode of proceeding was regulated. In 1181 was promulgated the first 'assize of arms,' an ordinance making it obligatory on every man to provide himself with a complete suit of armour and equipments, according to his rank and means.

17. The peace between the kings of France and England was followed by an agreement between them to undertake together a crusade for the preservation of the kingdom of Jerusalem, which had been founded by the Crusaders. Its king, Baldwin IV., was a minor and a leper, and the governing power was in the hands of his sister Sibylla and Raymond of Tripoli. The latter was suspected of intriguing with Saladin, the great Saracen leader, who was rapidly extending his conquests, and seemed to be on the point of taking the holy city. But the death of Louis took place in 1180, and the project came to nothing. Henry gave a large sum of money for the service of the Holy Land, but he did not fulfil the oath which he had taken before the Papal legates to go thither himself. He resisted even the offer of the crown of Jerusalem, which was made to him by a special

embassy, consisting of the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Grand Master of the Knights Templars. He summoned a great Council at Westminster to consider the question of his crusade, and their conclusion was that it was wiser for him to remain in England. At the close of 1187 the tidings ran all over Christendom that Jerusalem had once more fallen into the hands of the infidels. After the first excitement of alarm and sorrow the former enthusiasm for a crusade revived, and Henry with Philip Augustus, the new king of France, took the cross, in common with other princes and many nobles, at a meeting near Gisors. Henry levied a sum of 70,000*l.* in England, besides extorting 60,000*l.* more from the Jews, for the expenses of the expedition. It was, however, again prevented, and was left to be undertaken, after the death of Henry II., by Philip and Richard I.

18. In 1183 the proud refusal of Richard to do homage to the young King Henry for his duchy of Aquitaine became the occasion of a fresh war between the brothers, in which Geoffrey and the barons of Aquitaine joined Henry against Richard. The promoters of the unnatural war were excommunicated by the bishops of Normandy, but their hostilities continued till the death of Henry in June dissolved the confederacy. The young king, on his deathbed, tortured by remorse, implored his father to forgive and visit him. His father did not go, but sent his ring in token of his forgiveness. Geoffrey, too, was pardoned, but nevertheless, in alliance with his brother John, he renewed the war against Richard the following year (1184). Four years later a quarrel arose between the Kings of France and England respecting the position and the possessions of Adelais, daughter of Louis VII., who had been betrothed to Richard, and placed in the care of his father. The latter, although requested by Philip, her brother, and threatened with excommunication by the Pope, refused to give her up to Richard. It was reported that Henry himself was in love with her, and retained her as his mistress. She was never married to Richard. In November 1188 Richard, indignant at the report that his younger brother John, his father's favourite, was to receive the crown of England, did homage to Philip for all his father's dominions in France. Hostilities between the kings began again in January 1189, Richard being Philip's ally. Henry was driven out of Touraine, and soon after concluded a treaty of peace, by which he agreed to pay a large

indemnity to Philip, and to permit his vassals to do homage to Richard. An arrangement was also made about Adelaïs. The discovery at this time that his son John had joined Philip against him threw him into a hopeless melancholy. This brought on a fierce attack of fever, and during the seven days that it raged, he was attended affectionately, in his castle of Chinon, by Geoffrey, one of his natural sons, alone. He expressed his wish that Geoffrey should be made Archbishop of York or Bishop of Winchester. After his death his body was stripped by his menial attendants, and was buried with small ceremony in the church of Fontevraud, Earl Richard being present.

19. By his wife Eleanor, of Aquitaine, Henry II. had a family of five sons and three daughters. The sons were—William, born 1152, and died in infancy; Henry, born 1155, who has figured in the preceding pages as ‘the young king;’ Richard, successor of his father; Geoffrey, born 1158, married as we have seen to Constance, the heiress of Bretagne, and died 1186, leaving two children, Arthur and Eleanor, whose mournful fate will be told hereafter; and John, who became king. The daughters were—Matilda, born 1156, married to Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony, and died 1189—(from their fourth son, William, is descended the present royal family of England); Eleanor, born 1162, married to Alfonso III. of Castile, and died 1214—(their four daughters became the Queens of France, Leon, Portugal, and Aragon); and Joanna, born 1165, married first to William the Good, King of Sicily, and afterwards to Raymond VI., Count of Toulouse, accompanied Richard to Palestine, and died in 1199. Henry had also several illegitimate children by his mistresses; among them were William and Geoffrey, his sons by Rosamond Clifford—the ‘fair Rosamond’ of legend. William was surnamed Longsword (*Longespée*); married the heiress of William, Earl of Salisbury, and succeeded to her title and estates; died 1226. Geoffrey, born about 1154, was made, though a layman, Bishop of Lincoln, before he was twenty years old, but resigned the see rather than take holy orders in 1182. He appears to have been his father’s favourite. We shall hear of him again in the following reigns. These two sons were educated with the sons of Eleanor. Their mother, Rosamond, in her last years, retired to the nunnery of Godstow, and her remains were interred in the church. By the order of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, they were removed, and placed in the common cemetery.

## CHAPTER XI.

RICHARD I., CŒUR DE LION. (1189-1199.)

1. RICHARD, the third and eldest surviving son of Henry II., was at the time of his father's death in his thirty-second year. He was born at Oxford, September 13, 1157. He had spent little of his time in England, having received as his portion of his father's dominions the duchy of Aquitaine, in pursuance of the treaty of Montmirail, concluded in January 1169. With Aquitaine he held the county of Poitou, and was commonly called Count of Poitou. Of his share in the quarrels between his father and his brothers, and of his alliance with the King of France against his father, we have already spoken. So strong was the popular abhorrence of the conduct of Henry's sons towards their father, that it was a common story of the time that so long as Richard was in the church at Fontevraud, on the day of his father's funeral, the corpse bled at both nostrils, thus, according to a Scandinavian superstition, accusing him of murder. Some weeks elapsed, as in his father's case, before he came to England. But he lost no time in sending orders for the immediate liberation of his mother, the queen dowager, who was at the same time entrusted with the regency of the kingdom. Her brief administration was marked by several beneficial and popular measures—the release of many persons who had been arbitrarily imprisoned, the bestowal of pardon for various offences against the Crown, mitigation of the severe forest laws, and reversal of several outlawries. Although she had, more perhaps than anyone, contributed to the sorrow and bitterness of the last years of her husband, she now distributed, as she passed from place to place, liberal alms, that masses might be said for his soul. She took possession of Winchester and the royal treasure there, and ordered all freemen to take the oath of allegiance to Richard.

2. On July 20 (1189) Richard was formally received as Duke of Normandy, and after making some necessary arrange-

ments of matters in dispute between France and England, he sailed for his new kingdom, and landed at Portsmouth or Southampton (August 13). The English barons and prelates had been summoned by the queen-mother to receive him at Winchester, and his coronation took place at Westminster with unusual pomp (September 3). In the procession from the palace to the abbey church and up to the high altar, the great ecclesiastical dignitaries led the way. The barons and two earls went next, bearing the cap of state, the golden spurs, the rod and the sceptre. These were followed by Earl John, David, brother of the King of Scots, and William, Earl of Salisbury, carrying the three swords, and six earls and six barons bearing various articles of royal dress. Immediately before the king went the Earl of Albemarle, bearing the crown, and beside the king the bishops of Durham and Bath. Four barons supported on their lances a canopy of silk over his head. On the altar-steps stood the Archbishop of Canterbury, who administered the customary kingly oath—to bear peace, honour, and reverence to God and Holy Church; to exercise right, justice, and law on the people; and to abrogate wicked laws and perverse customs. Then followed the anointing and the putting on of the royal apparel. Duly arrayed, the king passed to the altar, and there renewing his promises, was crowned by the primate. After celebration of mass he returned to the palace.

3. The day of Richard's coronation, like that of the Conqueror's, was darkened by a terrible calamity. The slaughter of the English and the burning of London by the Normans on the one occasion had their counterpart in a massacre of the Jews and the firing of their houses in London on the other. In both cases the beginning of the outbreak was an incident—perhaps an accident—within the hall. Large numbers of Jews had come to London from all parts of the country to show their reverence to the king and to offer him gifts, hoping thereby to gain his favour and avert measures of persecution such as they had reason to dread. The Jews at that time were the chief bankers, the greatest foreign traders, and the wealthiest citizens of most countries in Christendom. Their religious creed, their enormous wealth, and the ruinous rates of interest which they demanded for loans, had drawn on them general hatred, envy, and rancour. In France a decree of banishment had been recently

issued against them by the new king, Philip Augustus, and it was feared that Richard might adopt the same course. The day before the coronation a royal proclamation appeared forbidding Jews and women to be present at the ceremony in the abbey or at the banquet in the hall. A few Jews, however, ventured into the hall to present their gifts and their petitions; but suddenly one of them was struck by a Christian, excitement rapidly spread, and on their expulsion from the hall the rumour ran that the king had ordered their destruction. Eagerly the crowd caught at the word, and murder and firing of houses went on madly. In some cases aged, sick, and bedridden persons were seized in their rooms and thrown out of the windows into the fires below. An attempt was made by the justiciary with a party of knights to suppress the riot, but in vain. Pillage went on all night, and order was not restored till the afternoon of the next day. The feast was not broken up by the tumult. Three only of the rioters were hanged, and in their case it was alleged that they had burnt the houses of Christians. The king issued a proclamation announcing that he took the Jews under his own protection, and forbade anyone to harm them.

4. Richard had become king of England, but although his reign lasted for ten years, he did not spend one whole year in his kingdom. His personal biography stands almost entirely apart from the history of England. Of an impulsive nature, possessing great physical strength, brave and fearless as a knight, Richard early caught the enthusiasm of the crusades, and was the first of all the nobles beyond the sea to take the cross after the loss of Jerusalem to Saladin (1187). He reproached his father for refusing the crown of Jerusalem, and with it the honour of defending the kingdom. His own first and almost exclusive care, during the three months which he spent in England after his coronation, was to make arrangements for carrying on the government in his absence, and to raise the necessary funds for his intended crusade. To get money was in fact his one aim, and he was unscrupulous as to the means he used. As Stephen had done, he sold the crown lands, castles, and towns, and vowed that he would sell London if he could find a buyer. He sold places and appointments, the highest in the kingdom, to whosoever would give most for them. 'His presence chamber,' says

Palgrave, 'was a market overt, in which all that the king could bestow was disposed of to the best chapman.' He hastily filled up all vacant bishoprics and abbeys, reaping a rich harvest of fees from his appointments. For a heavy fine he released from imprisonment his brother Geoffrey, Archbishop of York. For 20,000 marks he gave up to the King of Scots the castles on the border, and released him from the obligations of the treaty of Falaise. He sold the earldom of Northumberland to Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, and for a separate sum gave him the office of justiciary. This office was filled at the time of Richard's accession by the famous Glanville, who by some contemporary writers is said to have resigned in disgust and set out on the crusade, but by others is said to have been deprived, imprisoned, and compelled to pay a fine of three thousand pounds for his liberation. The vast sums thus raised by the king were augmented by the sum of one hundred thousand marks deposited in the treasury at Salisbury. To gratify the queen-mother he gave her large additional estates; and to bind Earl John to his interests he gave him English earldoms to the extent of one-third of the kingdom, besides the Norman earldom of Mortaigne. At a great council held at Pipewell, in Northamptonshire, the regency was entrusted to the Bishop of Durham, and the office of justiciary was given to him jointly with the Earl of Albemarle. William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, was soon after named joint-regent. In December Richard returned to Normandy, to raise more money by like methods there.

5. In the first months of the next year (1190) the fearful example set in London on the coronation day was followed in many parts of the country. The most terrible assault on the Jews was that at York in March. On the night of the 16th the house of a rich Jew, who had been killed in the London tumult, was plundered and burnt by a band of conspirators, who also massacred his wife and children. It was intended to attack and burn the house of Jocen, another Jew, the next night, but he retired with his family and property into the castle, other Jews doing the same, to the number of five hundred, besides women and children. The governor left the castle for a short time, and when he returned, found it shut against him. The refugees seeing themselves besieged by the infuriated populace, with no hope of escape, burnt all their property, buried their money, and killed

first their families, and then themselves. A few, who shrank from such horrors, offered to the assailants to receive baptism if their lives were spared. This was agreed to, but no sooner had they admitted the besiegers than they were all slaughtered. No adequate punishment fell on the perpetrators of these atrocities. Some of them escaped over the Scottish borders, and the chancellor, on his arrival at York, did little more than deprive of office the governor of the castle and the sheriff, who had taken part with him.

6. The story of Richard during the five years of his entire absence from his kingdom forms a large and important part of the history of the third crusade, but it is very slightly connected with the history of England. We shall therefore trace here only the leading points of the narrative. The kings of France and England had pledged themselves by oath to be ready for departure together at Easter. But in consequence of the death of Philip's queen a delay took place, and it was not till midsummer that they met with their vast force on the plains of Vezelai. Thence they marched to Lyons, and there separated, agreeing to rejoin each other at Messina, in Sicily. Philip had engaged a Genoese fleet of transports and some ships of war. Richard had ordered his own fleet to meet him at Marseilles. It was commanded by two bishops and three knights, who bore the title of constables. Dispersed by a storm in the Bay of Biscay, some of the ships entered the Tagus, and the crusaders took part in the war which was then being carried on against the Saracens in Portugal. But they turned their arms also against their Christian allies, and much blood was shed. The fleet passed on, and in August reached Marseilles, where the army was taken on board. Messina was reached about the middle of September, the two kings arriving a few days later.

7. Richard and Philip, with their armies, spent the winter in Sicily, proving very unpleasant and unwelcome guests to the Messinese. The English especially were the objects of their hatred and insult. Richard dealt with them as if they had been his own subjects, building gibbets and hanging offenders at his will. The Messinese persisted in their attacks on his troops, and refused him supplies; he therefore captured their city, and built a new fortress on the hill commanding it. Richard had a grave quarrel with the reigning king, Tancred, who had usurped the



throne at the death of William the Good, had refused to give up her dower to Joanna, the widow of William and Richard's sister, and had placed her in confinement. Richard obtained her liberation, and gave her a Calabrian castle, which he seized, for her residence. He demanded her dower and payment of the legacies bequeathed by William to Henry II.; and in satisfaction of all claims Tancred paid him forty thousand ounces of gold. A treaty was concluded by which Richard bound himself to support Tancred, and a marriage arranged between the young Arthur of Bretagne, Richard's nephew, and the infant daughter of Tancred. Mutual jealousies led to dissensions between Philip and Richard, but open collision was avoided, and secret heart-burnings were covered over with mutual ostentatious generosity. Christmas was kept with great splendour at Richard's castle on the hill, to which he invited all who had the rank of gentlemen in both armies. At this festival appeared a strange guest, invited by Richard—the Abbot Joachim, of Curacio in Calabria, whose interpretations of Hebrew and Christian prophecies were creating great excitement in Europe.

8. The betrothal of the French princess, Adelais, to Richard, and her detention by Henry II., have been related. Richard was resolved not to marry her, and thus involved himself in a fresh dispute with Philip, her brother. Richard had long wished to marry Berengaria, Princess of Navarre, and while at Messina had sent his mother, Eleanor, to bring her to Sicily. Philip asserted his sister's claim, but ultimately, for a large sum payable during the next five years, released Richard from his contract, the latter agreeing to give up Adelais and her portion after his return to Europe.

9. Sicily at last witnessed the departure of the crusading host. On March 30, 1191, Philip, with his army, sailed for Acre, which he reached in three weeks. Queen Eleanor returned to England; and on April 7 Richard set sail with his fleet, Joan, dowager-queen of Sicily, and Berengaria, accompanying the expedition in a separate vessel. A storm scattered the fleet, Richard fell sick at Rhodes, and some of his ships, thrown on the shores of Cyprus, were plundered by the islanders, and the crews were imprisoned. To avenge this treatment, for which satisfaction was refused, he attacked and took the town of Limasol, and at a conference held in its neighbourhood received the sub-

mission of Isaac,<sup>1</sup> the reigning prince (styled emperor), who agreed to pay a large sum, to do homage, to give up his castles, and to serve in the crusade. On condition of his faithful fulfilment of these terms Richard agreed to restore to him his sovereignty. Isaac escaped from confinement, his troops were again defeated, and his favourite daughter was taken prisoner. Once more he submitted, and was then imprisoned in a fortress in the Holy Land. This enterprise in Cyprus detained Richard and his army for two months. Before he left the island his marriage with Berengaria was solemnized, and his bride was crowned the day after the marriage. On June 3 the fleet sailed, and reached Acre in five days. The siege of that town had been commenced by the first band of the crusaders, a division of the imperial army, under the Duke of Suabia, in the summer of 1189. Many battles had been fought, and the slaughter was already prodigious. Fresh bands kept continually arriving from Europe, and Richard's delay had caused great irritation. From the neighbouring heights a powerful Mohammedan army under the command of Saladin threatened the besiegers. The arrival of the two kings, Philip and Richard, excited new enthusiasm in the Christian camp. Unfortunately both of them were soon prostrated by sickness. But the siege was carried on with energy, and Richard, borne to the trenches on his couch, took personal part in the attacks. The port was blockaded, and the supplies of the garrison were thus cut off. After repeated assaults on the town and frequent conflicts with the army of Saladin, the Christians reduced the garrison to the necessity of surrendering. The capitulation took place on July 12; the terms being that the city should be given up to the crusaders, that the Turks should restore the holy cross which they had taken at the battle of Tiberias, and set at liberty a large number of Christian captives. Forty days were allowed for the fulfilment of these conditions, and hostages to the number, it is said, of five thousand were detained as security. Acre thus passed into the hands of the crusaders.

10. History in tracing the adventurous career of the crusader, almost loses sight of the king and of the kingdom he left behind

<sup>1</sup> He was a member of the family of the Comneni, the imperial house of Constantinople.

him. The information remaining to us of the state of England during Richard's absence is very scanty, but so far as it goes is of a gloomy kind. The king was making frequent applications to his chancellor for money, and the chancellor had no resource but taxation of the people. His demands probably exceeded those of the king, and they were enforced with severity and insolence. Longchamp after a short struggle with his colleague in the office of justiciary, Hugh Pudsey, succeeded in reducing, and at last entirely annihilating his authority. He invited him to visit Tickhill Castle, and then treacherously arrested and confined him till he gave up his earldom of Northumberland, Windsor Castle, and the custody of the forest. Longchamp, meanwhile, had succeeded in inducing the Pope to appoint him legate in England and in Ireland. He was thus supreme in Church and State. So tyrannical was his administration that it was said of him 'he was more than a king to the laity, and more than a pope to the clergy.' Longchamp was a Norman of low birth, who had at an early age entered the service of Richard. He made himself valuable by his energy, capacity for business, and knowledge of the world, and obtained rich preferments from his master. He was excessively ambitious, and loved not only to possess power, but to exercise and display it. He went about attended like a king by a bodyguard and a vast retinue, to the ruinous cost of those who had to entertain him. Brighter features, however, appear in the portraits drawn of him by friendly hands; a large wisdom, noble generosity, and gentle temper. It is clear that he was faithful to his absent sovereign, and desirous of maintaining peace and order in the kingdom.

11. The intrigues of Earl John in England and the conflicts which they occasioned, and the attempts of the King of France on the French dominions of Richard, form the staple of the story of his empire during his absence. No sooner had Richard set out for Palestine than his brother John, calculating probably on the small chance of his return, began to intrigue for the purpose of securing the throne for himself. It was known that Richard designed and had declared his nephew, Arthur, to be his successor, and this prince, had the rules of hereditary succession been then definitely settled, would have had the better right. Longchamp early detected the pretensions of John and firmly opposed them. He made them known to Richard at Messina,

and John about the same time made complaints and charges against the justiciary. The king's confidence in the latter was not shaken, and a negotiation was opened with the king of Scotland to secure his support for Arthur. When Richard had sailed from Sicily, John assumed the position of heir-apparent, and to clear the way for his own success he resolved to get rid of the justiciary. The Archbishop of Rouen had been sent to England from Sicily, and it was rumoured that he brought letters from Richard imposing on Longchamp the restraint of a council. But no document of the kind was produced at the time. Soon after some partisans of John took up arms in his cause. While Longchamp was besieging the castle of Lincoln which was held in defiance of him by Gerard de Camville, John attacked and captured the royal castles at Nottingham and Tickhill. Unprepared for war and but feebly supported by the barons, Longchamp was compelled to make terms with John which were disadvantageous to himself. The strongest of the royal castles were to be held by several barons and bishops for the king, and in case of his death in Palestine, for John: the settlement in favour of Arthur was set aside, and the nobles took the oath of fealty to John as heir to the throne. Longchamp still retained his power as regent.

12. In the autumn (1191), while Richard was absorbed in his war with the infidels, another quarrel broke out between the Regent and Earl John. Geoffrey, Archbishop of York, at the instigation of John, in violation of the oath he had taken, and against the express order of the regent, came to England. He had been consecrated by the Archbishop of Tours, and was resolved to get possession of his see. Landing at Dover he refused to take the oath of allegiance or to quit the kingdom, and being seized in the church in which he had taken refuge was confined in Dover Castle. This arrest created much popular excitement, and in a few days, on the Bishop of London pledging himself for his good behaviour, Geoffrey was set free and allowed to go to London. John caught eagerly at the opportunity thus offered him to strike another blow at the regent. Assuming the power of a justiciary he convoked the barons and prelates at Loddon Bridge, near Reading, Longchamp at the same time countermanding the summons. At the meeting John made a theatrical display of affection for his half-brother, whom he had previously

hated, and implored the assembly to avenge his wrongs. On this occasion were first presented letters alleged to be from the king for the formation of a council under the Archbishop of Rouen as regent, and giving permission for Geoffrey to visit his diocese. Longchamp had been cited to appear but did not. After the meeting he left Windsor for London, hoping to be supported by the citizens, but they were disaffected, and John was at hand with an army. He then took refuge in the Tower. John and his followers were permitted to enter London on swearing to be faithful to Richard and to enlarge the franchises of the city. The next day (October 9) Longchamp was deprived of his office as justiciary, and John was proclaimed 'chief governor of the whole kingdom.' On the 10th, yielding to a display of force Longchamp gave up the keys of the Tower to John and withdrew to Dover Castle. Attempting to escape in disguise to France he was detected and placed in confinement, but only for a short time. John permitted him to escape and he passed into Normandy. The revenues of his see were sequestered, and the Archbishop of Rouen was made justiciary in his stead.

13. The retirement of Longchamp to Normandy was followed by a correspondence and negotiations between him, the Pope, the king, and the queen-dowager, of which the accounts are obscure and confused. The Pope warmly supported the banished minister and bishop, and renewed his legatine commission, which had expired by the death of the former Pontiff. The legate immediately excommunicated his enemies in England, but the sentences had no terror for them, as without entering his province, it was said, he had no jurisdiction. The letters of Longchamp to the king induced the latter to write to Eleanor in his behalf, and a correspondence took place first between her and the exile, and then between him and John. John's representations brought Longchamp once more to England, in the hope of being reinstated. But as soon as he arrived John accepted a bribe from the enemies of the legate, and withdrew the offers he had made. Eleanor followed his example, and the deprived minister being again ordered to leave the country, went to Normandy to await the king's return. Such was the state of affairs in England during the years 1191 and 1192.

14. The capture of Acre by the crusaders excited almost the same joy in Christendom as the recovery of Jerusalem would

have done. The siege had lasted nearly two years, fighting had been almost incessant, and the sacrifice of human lives had been enormous. To European watchers of the struggle it might well seem that the fall of Acre was the opening of the way to the holy city, and that the crusaders had nothing to do but to march straight to its rescue. This hope was disappointed. It was announced that the king of France intended to return home. He was in ill-health; much time had been wasted by the delay of Richard in his Sicilian and Cypriote quarrels; and, worst of all, the two kings could not agree in anything. One of the subjects of dispute between them was the succession to the throne of Jerusalem. Richard supported one of the claimants—Guy of Lusignan, Philip the other—Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat. But it can hardly be doubted that the secret of Philip's relinquishment of the crusade is disclosed in the terms of the oath which he made to Richard before sailing from Acre, that he would not invade the territories of the king of England, nor attack any of his vassals, until after Richard's return from Palestine. Richard was not blind to the danger which Philip's ambition threatened to his dominions in France, and therefore exacted from him the only security possible under the circumstances—an oath. On July 31, six weeks after the fall of Acre, Philip, leaving ten thousand men under the command of the Duke of Burgundy, set sail for France, accompanied as he quitted the port by the hisses and execrations of the populace as a deserter from the sacred war.

15. Three weeks after the departure of Philip the forty days allowed for the fulfilment of the terms of the capitulation of Acre expired. The treaty still remained unexecuted, and the terrible penalty was to be inflicted. The crusading army was excited by a report, probably false, that Saladin had put his captives to death, and they clamoured for revenge. On the fatal day (August 20) the hostages, to the number of several thousands (3,000 to 5,000), were led out in two divisions; those allotted to the king of England to a hill near the camp of Saladin, those which had fallen to the king of France to the walls of the town. At the same hour, at signals given, the whole of them were massacred in the presence of multitudes of spectators. Seven chief men (Emirs) only were spared, and that for the sake of their ransom. Insults were added to cruelty, the dead bodies being cut open by the French and English soldiers for the sake of the

precious stones which it was supposed the victims had swallowed. The gall of the infidels was carefully kept for medicinal uses. It was most likely after this massacre that Saladin retaliated by putting the Christian prisoners to death. Atrocious as these bloody deeds were and seem to us, they did not at the time excite any sense of horror in either Islam or Christendom. Richard exulted in the massacre, and the brutal multitudes were taught to see in it a praiseworthy smiting of the enemies of Christ. In a little while the two great leaders were courteously communicating with each other.

16. After this slaughter Richard led his army, now greatly reduced in numbers, along the coast towards Jaffa (Joppa). Saladin harassed them daily and all day long, till on September 7, at Arsoof, a great battle was fought, in which he was totally defeated with very great loss. He continued to ravage the country, but the progress of the crusaders to Jaffa was uninterrupted. There two months were spent, partly for the purpose of strengthening the fortifications, partly to gratify the indolence of many who began to grow weary of their task. November, with its rains and sickness, came before they made any further advance. They next encamped at Ramla, within a few miles of Jerusalem, and lay there for seven weeks. In the first week of January, hopeless of success in any attack on the city, Richard led the army back to Ascalon, and employed the rest of the winter and part of the spring in restoring the fortifications of that important town and of others along the coast. During this period he received urgent calls to return to his kingdom, which was in a distracted state, but he proclaimed his resolution to spend another year in the Holy Land. The dissensions about the crown of Jerusalem still continued, and at length to terminate them Richard consented to the election of Conrad (April 1192). The king-elect was immediately after murdered at Tyre by two of the assassins, the fanatical subjects of the Old Man of the Mountain. The report was spread that Richard had ordered this murder, but the charge is without proof, and is incompatible with his whole character and conduct. His nephew, Henry of Champagne, soon after married Conrad's widow, and was elected king of Jerusalem. Cyprus was given, by way of compensation, to Guy of Lusignan.

17. A second march on Jerusalem was undertaken in June. The army arrived again within sight of the city, but by the

advice of a council called together to consider the matter, Richard again abandoned the enterprise and fell back on Acre, about the close of July. Saladin took advantage of the retreat to attack Jaffa, and captured the town, the inhabitants taking refuge in the citadel. Richard hastened by sea, with seven small vessels, to relieve the place, and swimming ashore with unhesitating audacity, which inspirited his followers to do the same, dispersed the Saracen troops that opposed his landing, and regained the town. The next day he was joined by the troops which had come by land, and Saladin with his army appeared before the town. The crusaders were a very small band, and were immensely outnumbered by the enemy. They were drawn up in close array, and presented so firm a line that seven charges of the Saracen cavalry broke in vain against it. Richard then with his companions dashed into the midst of the enemy, and outdid himself in deeds of valour. So great was the astonishment and admiration excited by his prowess, that during the battle Saphaeddin, the brother of Saladin, sent him as a present two fine Arab horses. The battle of Jaffa was reputed his most brilliant achievement as a warrior, and the victory was followed by an armistice which terminated the third crusade. The armistice was concluded for three years, and by its articles Ascalon was to be dismantled, Jaffa, Tyre, and the country between them were to be left to the Christians, and pilgrims were to have free access to Jerusalem. Richard's name had become a terror to the Mohammedans, and was employed, says Gibbon, 'by the Syrian mothers to silence their infants; and if a horse suddenly darted from the way, his rider was wont to exclaim, "Dost thou think King Richard is in that bush?"'

18. In pursuance of the conditions of the truce many bodies of Christians visited Jerusalem; they were in great peril from the fanaticism of the Turks, but were protected and generously cared for by Saladin and his brother. Richard would not be persuaded to go, refusing 'to receive from the courtesy of the Infidels what he could not obtain by the gift of God.' His exertions on the field of Jaffa threw him into a fever which greatly weakened him. But having partly recovered, he embarked at Acre on October 9 (1192), with deep feeling taking his last look of the shore; and, stretching out his arms towards the holy places, uttered a fervent prayer that he might yet



return and deliver them from the infidels. His fleet had sailed a few days earlier, and reached Sicily in safety. His own ship had to contend with contrary winds, and did not reach Corfu for a month. Thence he passed with his small number of attendants in three coasting-vessels to the Upper Adriatic, and was driven by storms on the coast of Istria. He knew that in his journey across Europe he would be in peril from numerous enemies. Philip and John had agreed to seize his dominions; the Emperor, Henry VI., at enmity with him on account of his dealings with Tancred, claimed the crown of Sicily by virtue of his marriage with Constantia, heiress of the late king; Leopold, duke of Austria, could never forgive him for tearing down his banner from the walls of Acre, and many German princes looked on him as the murderer of Conrad. Assuming the name of Hugh the merchant, and putting on the dress of a pilgrim, he hoped to elude the vigilance of his enemies. After several hairbreadth escapes he reached Erperg, near Vienna, in December. Weary and sick he was unable to go farther; his presence there became known; and on December 20 he was seized by the duke of Austria, and sent to the castle of Tyernsteign. Immediately after the festival of Christmas the emperor claimed possession of the royal captive; and at Easter 1193 he was handed over by the duke for a sum of sixty thousand pounds. The emperor had him put in chains and confined in a castle in the Tyrol, strictly guarded by day and by night.

19. In England the tidings of the king's departure from Acre roused eager anticipation of seeing him once more. Weeks passed on and months, the king did not arrive, and expectation was turned into disappointment. Mere ignorance of his fate was gradually exchanged for confused rumours, and vague conjectures of something disastrous. At last the fact came to light through a copy of a letter written by the emperor to the king of France, and all Europe was amazed and indignant at the discovery. The place of the king's imprisonment was first learnt, not as poetic legends tell, by the wandering minstrel Blondel, whose song, responsive to the king's, reached his ear in his dungeon, but by the exiled justiciary Longchamp who began to take measures for his liberation. The Pope excommunicated Duke Leopold, and threatened the emperor with the same sentence unless he set the king free. John, who was deeply engaged in

intrigues with Philip for dispossessing Richard of his dominions, heard the news of his imprisonment with unconcealed satisfaction. He went without delay to France, made a pretended surrender of part of Normandy to Philip, and did homage to him for the other continental dominions of Richard. Having collected an army of mercenaries he returned to win by force the crown of England. The prelates and barons stood faithful to Richard, the mercenary troops of John were defeated, and he was compelled to agree to an armistice. Philip, at the same time, invaded Normandy, but being defeated before Rouen by the citizens, who were led by the Earl of Essex, he withdrew into his own territory.

20. Through the exertions of Longchamp in behalf of Richard, he was brought before the diet of the empire at Hagenau (April 13), and in reply to the various charges brought against him, made so convincing a defence that the emperor ordered his chains to be removed. With absurd inconsistency he then sent him back to prison, and demanded a large ransom for his liberation. Bent on extorting the largest sum he could from the English people, the emperor several times raised his demand, and the negotiations dragged dismally on for five months. Longchamp was sent to England with instructions to the council of regency for raising the money. The sum obtained by the first levy was insufficient, and two more levies were made. The burden thus imposed on all classes of the people was almost intolerable, and bred wide-spread discontent. The terms were not finally settled with the emperor till September 22, and even then their performance was deferred for some time. It was agreed that the king should pay one hundred thousand marks for his ransom, that he should liberate the Cypriote prince, but not reinstate him, and should give up the daughter of Isaac to her uncle, duke Leopold. To make the relations of the king and the emperor closer still, Richard, by the advice, it is said, of his mother, who by this time had joined him, resigned his crown to Henry, and accepted it again of him to hold as a fief of the empire. So venal was Henry that he listened willingly to the offer made by Philip and John to pay him a larger sum than the ransom if he would still keep Richard a prisoner. The remonstrances of the German princes who had become sureties for his liberation shamed the emperor out of accepting the scandalous proposal. On the payment of seventy thousand

marks Richard was released on February 4, 1194. Hostages were given for the remainder, part of which was afterwards paid and part was remitted in consequence of the threats of the Pope.

21. After an absence of more than four years Richard landed at Sandwich on March 13, 1194, and his subjects gave him, in spite of all their burdens, a hearty welcome. John was gone in pursuance of the warning sent him by Philip—'Take care of yourself, the devil is broken loose.' Several of his castles had previously been surrendered, and the king had no enemy to fight in England. After a few days' stay in London he received the surrender of the castles of Nottingham and Tickhill, and on March 30 held a great council at Nottingham. At this council John and his adviser, Hugh, bishop of Coventry, were accused of treason, and cited to appear within forty days. Failing to do so John was to be outlawed, and the bishop to be at the king's mercy. Means were also devised for raising money for the intended war with Philip, and a discussion took place as to the necessity of repeating the ceremony of the coronation. In pursuance of the decision of the council Richard was re-crowned at Winchester by Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury (Easter). Before sailing for Normandy Richard appointed Hubert guardian of the kingdom and chief justiciary. Longchamp held the office of chancellor till his death in 1198. Hubert had been a pupil of Glanville, and had accompanied Richard in the crusade. His administration was wise and efficient, and although it was part of his duty to raise money for the king he acted with less violence and unfairness than his predecessors had done.

22. In May Richard passed over with his army to Normandy, and on his landing at Barfleur he was met by John, who fell down before him and prayed his forgiveness. In violation of his oath John had deserted his ally Philip, and had just treacherously massacred all the officers of the garrison at Evreux. At the intercession of Eleanor he was pardoned, his brother saying, 'I hope I shall as easily forget his injuries as he will my pardon.' A campaign of two months followed, the operations of which were on a petty scale and indecisive, and ended in a truce for a year (July 23). The state of hostilities, with intervals of truce, lasted till Richard's death. Truces were as readily violated as agreed to, and cruel retaliation was indulged in on both sides. Among the more noteworthy occurrences in the course of the

war was the capture of Philip, bishop of Beauvais, by Richard's troops. He was Richard's personal enemy, and had instigated, as it was believed, the rigorous treatment of the king by the emperor. He was at once thrust, loaded with chains, into a dungeon of the castle of Rouen, and appealing to the Pope, Celestine III., received from him a just rebuke for his military propensities. Celestine, however, wrote to the king, begging him to 'pity his dear son,' to which the king replied by sending to the Pope the bishop's coat of mail, having attached to it the legend—'This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.' Richard was offered a very large ransom, but he kept the warlike bishop in prison. The most brilliant action of the desultory war was the engagement near Gisors, in 1198, in which Richard routed the French, and Philip narrowly escaped with his life, being thrown, with twenty of his knights, into the river Epte, by the falling of a bridge as they were crossing it. In the course of these hostilities with France, Richard's two bitterest enemies died—duke Leopold in 1195, and the emperor Henry in 1197. Each of them on his deathbed professed penitence for his injustice to the king of England, and gave orders for the restitution of the money extorted from him. It does not appear that such restitution was made.

23. The pressure of incessantly repeated demands for money for the king's service was so severe, and the assessments were so unequal on rich and poor, that in London the popular discontent gave rise to a dangerous movement. For a time the misery of the impoverished masses, which so frequently uttered itself only in vague moanings, found a spokesman and interpreter in one William Fitzosbert, familiarly called Longbeard. He was a man both eloquent and energetic. In 1195 he went over to Normandy to lay the complaints of the Londoners before the king, praying that the burden of taxation should be better apportioned between the rich and the poor. Richard received him courteously, and promised attention to the matter, but nothing was done. Secret associations were then formed for obtaining the desired relief, and fifty thousand members are said to have sworn obedience to Fitzosbert, who was called the 'advocate' and 'saviour' of the poor. He kept alive the enthusiasm of his adherents by delivering daily, at Paul's Cross, exciting political sermons. So strong was his hold on the people that the authorities were afraid to

touch him. The chief justiciary, archbishop Hubert, endeavoured to lessen his influence by meeting the poor citizens and reasoning with them. Fitzosbert was watched day by day, and was suddenly seized in the street. He killed the man who laid hands on him, and took refuge in a church. After a desperate resistance for several days the church was burnt, and the champion of the poor was stabbed, but not killed, as he tried to escape. He was dragged at the tail of a horse to the Tower, was summarily condemned by the justiciary, and thence dragged in the same way to Smithfield. There he was hung, with nine companions. Like other favourites of the people and victims of injustice, real or believed, Longbeard was honoured as a martyr, miracles were said to be wrought at his grave, and pilgrimages were made to it by poor rustics from remote places. Morsels broken off from his gibbet, and the very dust on which his feet had trodden, were eagerly sought after and treasured like the relics of saints. To put an end to the visits of the people the place was strictly guarded, and many men and women were whipped and thrown into prison. The treatment of Longbeard, and especially the violation of the right of sanctuary, brought much obloquy on Hubert, and the Pope, to whom complaints were made, insisted on the archbishop resigning his secular offices.

24. In the course of the year 1197 Richard built a strong castle at Andelys, on the Seine, which became famous under the nickname of *Château Gaillard* (Saucy Castle). He soon after gave it up to the Archbishop of Rouen in exchange for the town of Dieppe, and when it was taken by the French, Richard attempted, but unsuccessfully, to recover it for the prelate. In January, 1199, a truce for five years between Richard and Philip was concluded through the mediation of the Pope, Innocent III. This truce was never to be broken, for the great warrior had to depart elsewhere. A life illustrious by so many exploits, hitherto safe on so many 'well-foughten fields,' was to come to its end in a petty conflict before an obscure castle of Poitou. According to the generally accepted story, Vidomar, viscount of Limoges, refused to give up to the king, as his over-lord, a treasure found on his lands. The king besieged his castle of Chalus-Chabrol, and was wounded by an arrow in the left shoulder. The castle was stormed, and all the men captured in it were hanged except the archer, Bertrand de Gourdon, who

had shot the king. The wound was unskilfully treated, and the king found that he was dying. The archer was called to him, and was asked why he sought the king's life. On his replying that Richard had slain his father and two of his brothers, and that he was content to die, the king set him at liberty, and gave him a hundred shillings. He was, however, detained by Marchadee, captain of the mercenaries, who ordered him to be flayed alive. Richard Lion-Heart died at Chaluz, in the forty-second year of his age, on the 6th or 8th of April, 1199. He bequeathed his heart to the city of Rouen, and his body was buried at Fontevraud. He left no children, and named, it is said, his brother John his successor on the throne of England.

## CHAPTER XII.

JOHN<sup>1</sup> (1199-1212.)

1. IN so far as the fortunes of the nation depended on the character of its sovereign, the prospect for England at the accession of John was very gloomy indeed. For years previously he had kept himself so prominently before the eyes of his countrymen, taking part in so many political intrigues and conflicts, that few could be ignorant of the main features of his character. His impatient ambition to grasp the sceptre, his unscrupulousness as to the means which he used for compassing his selfish ends, his duplicity and perfidy, his cruelty, and his cowardice, were already open to the world's eye. Nor less patent were his personal vices, his arrogance and his meanness, his lust for money and his gross profligacy. Little was to be hoped, much was to be feared, if the destinies of a great nation were entrusted to the guidance of one so unworthy and so incompetent for the task. The story of his reign is the justification of the reasonable foreboding of ill. But while the immediate consequences of his rule were calamitous, bringing loss and dishonour on the kingdom and covering himself with infamy, its remoter results were beneficent in ways and to a degree which could hardly have been divined by the wisest heads of the time. The crimes of King John brought on him the detestation of his English and foreign subjects, and cost him the loss of the greater part of his dominions in France. His arbitrary and tyrannical rule roused a determined opposition on the part of his chief vassals; these found support in the strength of the burgher class, which had grown into great importance; and thus it came to pass that from the hands of one of the worst tyrants was wrested by stout-hearted Englishmen the Great Charter of their ever-growing liberties. His dastardly prostration at the feet of the Pope, his attempt to degrade England to the condition of a fief of Rome,

<sup>1</sup> His surname, *Sans-terre* or Lackland, denoted that he was not the holder of any fiefs, as his brothers were, in his father's lifetime.

contributed perhaps more than anything else to awaken in English hearts that jealousy and hatred of the Papal power, that resolution to keep whole the national independence, which, working continuously through the following centuries, had their issue and triumph in the Reformation.

2. King John was the fifth and youngest son of Henry II., by his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and was born at Oxford on the 24th of December 1166. His birthday was thus almost exactly the hundredth anniversary of the coronation of William the Conqueror. At the death of his brother, Richard I., he was in his thirty-third year. Richard left no legitimate issue, and the succession to the crown was disputed between John, who was nearest in blood to him, and Arthur of Bretagne, one degree further removed, but son and heir to Geoffrey, John's elder brother. Although the principle of hereditary succession was establishing itself in most of the monarchies of Europe, it was at the close of the twelfth century only a strong tendency, not a precise rule. Nor was the order of succession exactly defined. In England the monarchy was still substantially elective. Four of the five kings who had reigned since the Conquest had the popular choice for their strongest title. Arthur had been distinctly recognized by Richard as his successor, but John, who was present at the death-bed of his brother, gave out that Richard, just before he died, appointed him his successor, and made him heir to one-third of his property. His first care, after receiving the homage of the knights in attendance, was to get possession of Richard's treasure at Chinon, at the same time sending the primate Hubert and William Marshall into England to look after his interests there. He then passed into the provinces of Touraine, Maine, and Anjou, but he found no welcome there, Arthur being already proclaimed as their sovereign. For this rejection he sacked the principal towns, Mans and Angers, and burnt the latter. He then hastened into Normandy, where he was received without opposition, and on the 25th of April was crowned Duke by the Archbishop.

• 3. The death of Richard was not certainly known in England for some days after it had taken place; and then the usual disorders of an interregnum followed. On the arrival of Hubert and William Marshall all freemen were called upon to swear allegiance to Duke John; but the barons and bishops began to show signs of resistance, and to make preparations for defence of their castles.



At a great council at Northampton, however, the envoys of John by open promises and secret influences induced them unanimously to take the oath. John then came to England, landing at Shoreham on the 25th of May, and on the 27th was crowned by the primate at Westminster. In the discourse of the primate the elective character of the monarchy was especially insisted on, and John's title was declared to rest on the choice of the nation, not on his descent nor on the will of his brother. After receiving the homage of the barons and bishops and visiting St. Alban's shrine, John returned to Normandy in June.

4. Philip of France, naturally ambitious and reasonably desirous of recovering and uniting with his dominions the provinces subject to the English king, now saw, in the weakness and pusillanimity of John, and in the claims of his rival Arthur fresh grounds of hope for the success of his enterprise. He professed the zeal of a champion for the orphan's rights, and under the pretext of such 'a just and charitable war,' fought for his own aggrandizement and that of France. He knighted the young prince, who was then about fifteen years of age, then entered Normandy and burnt Evreux, and placed French garrisons in Anjou, Touraine, and Maine. The details of the petty war which ensued are unimportant. It was suspended by a truce which in May 1200 was converted into a formal peace, by the terms of which Philip abandoned Arthur, and acknowledged John as king, receiving an immense sum as a 'relief' on his succession and acquiring for his son Louis the county of Evreux and other territories. A marriage was also arranged and solemnized between Louis and Blanche of Castile, the niece of John.<sup>1</sup> To exhibit to the world their new 'amity and painted peace,' John visited Paris in the summer of 1201, and was lodged in Philip's own palace.

5. In less than a year the sworn faith of the kings was unsworn, and the peace was followed by a war which ended in the loss to England of the greater part of her territory in France. The lawless passions of John created a new occasion for the intervention of Philip under a generous pretext. Ten or twelve years before, John had married Joanna (or Hadwisa), daughter and heiress of the Earl of Gloucester, with whom he received an immense dowry. In 1201 he obtained a sentence of divorce from

<sup>1</sup> She was the daughter of his sister Eleanor, wife of Alfonso III.

her and sought the hand of a princess of Portugal. But before the negotiation could be completed he was captivated by the charms of the celebrated beauty, Isabella, daughter of the Count of Angoulême, who had recently become the wife of the Count of La Marche. His own proposal to the Portuguese maiden and the marriage bond of Isabella were barriers easily broken through; and with the sanction of her father the newly-wedded wife, caught by the glare of a crown, left her husband and gave her hand to the king of England. The marriage was solemnized by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who had granted the divorce between the king and his first wife. In the autumn John brought his bride to England, and they were both crowned at Westminster (October 8). The ceremony was repeated at Easter of the following year (1202). It was about the same time that the Count of La Marche began to avenge his injury by predatory incursions into Poitou and Aquitaine; but unable to resist the king he appealed to Philip, who gladly, though at first secretly, agreed to take up arms against John. With zeal new kindled for Arthur, whose mother Constance was now dead, Philip received his homage for Bretagne, Anjou, Touraine and Maine, and joined by the disaffected barons captured many of the castles in those provinces. Arthur himself, with a small force, attacked and took the town of Mirabeau in Poitou, where the queen-mother Eleanor was then residing. But she escaped into the citadel, and John hastened to her relief. While Arthur was besieging his grandmother in the tower, his uncle invested the town and besieged him. The town was taken, and Arthur with his sister Eleanor and two hundred knights, fell into the hands of John. Among them was the Count of La Marche. The prisoners, with wanton barbarity were loaded with chains and conveyed in bullock-carts to various dungeons in Normandy. Some of them were sent to England, and of these twenty-two are said to have been starved to death in Corfe Castle.

6. To King John the most important result of this petty victory was the capture of his rival. He had now in his power the young boy for whom, professedly, 'all this coil was made,' and who was 'a very serpent in his way.' The cruel nature of the man and the specious policy of the king would be at one in dooming Arthur to death. To the imagination of such a one as John the dangers likely to grow out of the humane policy

which would spare his rival's life were apparent enough. But of the actual results of a cold-blooded murder of his nephew in the bloom of his boyhood no prevision was possible to his dim inward eye. The fate of Arthur is certain, the details of his end are not known. He was first sent to the castle of Falaise, whence he was soon removed to the castle of Rouen. No further trace of him is to be found. He was missed entirely in a few months, and the worst suspicions passed current in the world. The word was plainly uttered (April 1203) that John had murdered his nephew, and John heard it and held his peace. Whether Arthur was murdered at a feast by the hand of John himself and his body thrown into the Seine; whether the deed was done by John as the two were riding on a cliff and the body thrown into the sea; or whether it is true that John first ordered his eyes to be destroyed by hot irons, that the humanity of Hubert, his keeper, spared him this horrible infliction, and that afterwards the murder was done by night in a boat on the Seine, it is now impossible to discover. All these statements are found in the accounts and traditions of the time. The belief established itself that the hands of the king of England were stained with the blood of his nephew, and what the murderer did not foresee he was not long in learning by hard facts—how much he had lost in that which he accounted so clearly won; how his bloody deed had cooled the hearts of his people and frozen up all their zeal in his service. Arthur's sister, Eleanor, called 'the maid of Bretagne,' was sent to England and there kept in confinement, but was honourably treated till her death in 1241.

7. Popular indignation rose to the highest pitch among the Bretons. At an assembly of the States they resolved to accuse John before the king of France, their feudal overlord. John was summoned to answer the charge before his peers, as a vassal of Philip, and as he failed to appear, judgment was pronounced against him that as a murderer, a traitor, and an enemy to the king of France, he had forfeited his dominions held by homage, and that re-entry should be made by force of arms. Normandy was immediately invaded by the Bretons, who went savagely to work as avengers of the murder of their prince; and then by Philip, who, after taking several towns and fortresses, joined the Breton army at Caen. While the duchy was being thus overrun, the Duke was at Rouen, feast-

ing and dancing away the time in the society of effeminate courtiers and abandoned women. He turned away his ear from unwelcome truth, and merely boasted that he would recover in a day what his enemies were taking from him with so much effort. The famous *Château Gaillard* was besieged, but John left the attempt to relieve it to his general, the Earl of Pembroke. The reduction of Radipont near Rouen in December at last alarmed him, and he hastened away to England.

8. While Philip was energetically carrying on the subjugation of Normandy, John remained passive and apparently helpless. He found his barons both English and foreign indifferent to his interests, and determined to make no strenuous effort to save his foreign territories from falling into Philip's hands. Some of them were heavily fined, others were declared to have forfeited their estates. He collected an army in England, but at the last moment the nobles unanimously refused to follow him to Normandy. Thus forsaken by his natural supporters he was unable to confront Philip in the field, and as a last resource he turned for help to Rome. What he could not check by the sword he would, if possible, prevent by the intervention of the Pope. At his urgent request, two legates were sent into France to appeal to Philip in the name of the pontiff, but Philip took no heed to their appeal. He continued his conquests, taking successively *Château Gaillard*, *Falaise*, and *Rouen*; and before the end of July (1204) the whole of Normandy was lost to John and, after existing as a separate state for two hundred and ninety-two years, was reannexed to the crown of France. *Anjou*, *Maine* and *Touraine* also submitted to Philip before the end of the same year, and of all the territories in France which had belonged to the king of England, only *Aquitaine* now remained under his rule. In the spring of 1205 a great council was held at *Winchester* at which a scheme for an expedition to France was adopted; but although the ships were collected and set sail, the number of troops was so small that the fleet returned and the scheme was abandoned. In the following year (1206), it was resumed, and John landed with an army at *Rochelle*, in June; took the castle of *Montauban*, burnt *Angers*, and formed the siege of *Nantes*. The siege was raised in order to give battle to Philip; the proposed battle gave place to negotiation; and the treaty was stopped by the sudden flight of the king. Philip

was induced by the legate to consent to a truce with John for two years, John at the same time renouncing in his favour all his territory north of the Loire.

9. In 1205, the year after the conquest of Normandy by Philip, the year before the peace by which its loss was formally acknowledged by John, the latter entered upon a contest of another kind, the issue of which was no less disgraceful to him. On the death of Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, the election of his successor was the occasion of a dispute at first between the younger and the elder monks of Christchurch, and soon after between King John and the Pope, Innocent III. The chapters were invested, nominally, with the right of electing the bishops, but over their choice the king had a twofold controlling power. The royal licence was necessary before the election, and the royal approval after it. As some of the cathedral churches were at their foundation connected with monasteries, the monks had in such cases been accustomed to exercise the rights of chapters. They clung firmly to their right of choosing the bishops, and they were at the same time, by their life of seclusion from the active world, unfitted to judge and choose wisely. In the case of the metropolitan see of Canterbury, the exclusive claim of the monks was resisted by the prelates; and at each election the contest between the hostile claimants was renewed. The royal authority was always exerted on the side of the prelates. The death of Hubert was no sooner known than the younger monks, hastily in the night and without asking for the royal licence, met and elected Reginald, their sub-prior, to the vacant see. They sent him at once to Rome to get the Papal sanction, obliging him by oath to secrecy till he reached the city: an obligation which his vanity led him to violate as soon as he landed on the Continent. The elder monks, meanwhile, proceeded in regular course to obtain the king's licence, and in pursuance of its recommendation to elect John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, the chief counsellor of the king. The bishops were content with this choice, and the new primate was enthroned in the presence of the king and was at once invested with the temporalities of the see.

10. The questions at issue were then referred to the Pope, delegates of all parties being sent to Rome. After a patient investigation of the counter claims of the monks and the bishops,

the Pope decided in favour of the former. The validity of the two elections was next examined, and both were annulled; that of the sub-prior on account of its irregularity, and that of the Bishop of Norwich on the ground that it was made before the first election had been pronounced void. The king was bent on securing the election of John de Gray, and had exacted an oath from the monks that they would elect him and no other candidate. But the Pope was as strongly bent on getting the man of his own choice appointed, and threatened the monks with excommunication if they regarded their oath to the king. Innocent had fixed on Stephen Langton, an Englishman who had attained high distinction as a scholar and a theologian, and enjoyed the profound respect of all who knew him for his pure life and noble character. He had been Chancellor of the University of Paris, and had been created Cardinal of St. Chrysogonus by Innocent himself. The monks, with the terrors of excommunication hanging over them, elected him. To incline John in his favour, the Pope sent letters, envoys, and a rich gift to him; but his messengers were stopped at Dover. After a short delay, no answer from John arriving, the Pope himself consecrated Stephen Langton primate of England at Viterbo.

11. The act of consecration by the Pope without the express consent of the king threw John into a rage. In his wrath he struck first at the monks, and sent a band of armed men who threatened to burn their convent, and drove them out of England. They went to Flanders, the lands of Christchurch were seized by the king, and as no one would till them for him they lay waste. The church of Canterbury was placed in the care of the monks of St. Augustine. John next expressed his anger and indignation in a letter to Innocent, and declared that he would put an end to all communications between England and Rome, and that Stephen Langton should never set foot in his realm as Archbishop of Canterbury. The gauntlet was thrown down by the king, and the Pope was dared to do his worst. The Pope moved with dignity and without unseemly hurry. He tried the force of remonstrances and wrote to the barons and prelates of England to do all they could with their material and spiritual weapons to save the king and the kingdom from the evils which were imminent. These measures failing, he instructed the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester to wait on the king and to attempt

once more to induce him, by plain exposition of the consequences of his continued obstinacy, to yield and receive Stephen as primate. If he should still be refractory they were to threaten him with an interdict.

12. The interdict, the most formidable weapon of the Roman Church, forged by ecclesiastical ingenuity perhaps several centuries earlier, had been handled frequently and with terrible effect in the eleventh century. Europe had just seen Philip Augustus, one of the most ambitious, haughty, and determined sovereigns of the age, humbled and brought to the feet of the Pope by the interdict laid on his realm of France. His rival was now to be subdued by the same means. The three prelates fulfilled their commission to the king; and when at last the dread threat was spoken, a paroxysm of rage made him pale and with quivering lips he swore, with his usual horrid and blasphemous oath, that if they dared to do it, he would drive all the clergy out of the kingdom and confiscate their property. 'As for the Roman shavelings,' he said, 'I will tear out their eyes and cut off their noses, and so send them to the Pope, that the nations may see their infamy.' The prelates, threatened with violence, hastened away from his presence. In the ensuing Lent season (24th March) they published the interdict against all John's dominions. The forms and outward services of religion were by the sentence instantly suppressed. From end to end of England, in monasteries and churches alike ceased the voices of prayer and of praise; the church bells no longer chimed; souls passed away in death and no 'passing bell' announced their change: the sacraments were suspended: church festivals were unobserved, church processions were not seen: there was baptism only for babes, and the eucharist only for the dying: the dead were buried in unconsecrated ground and the mourners heard no words of hope and consolation. Even the relics of saints were removed and laid on ashes on the church floor, and the churches themselves were closed against all worshippers. The horror that fell on the nation with this sudden total extinction of all that was visible of religion it is scarcely possible for us to imagine.

13. In the midst of the gloom and misery of the people King John maintained or affected a lightheartedness and disdainful indifference to the interdict. He indulged his revenge in severe

measures against all the clergy who obeyed the Pope. The three prelates who had published the sentence had fled to the Continent, but he seized and imprisoned their kinsfolk. In all ways open to him he oppressed and persecuted the clergy, and enriched himself by his exactions from them. For more than four years he continued to defy the Pope, notwithstanding the interdict and the subsequent sentence of excommunication on himself. During this period he undertook in person expeditions into Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. William of Scotland who had been released by Richard I. from the obligation of homage for his kingdom, met John at Lincoln in November 1200, and did homage and swore fealty to him as his liege lord. Whether this act was for his kingdom or only for his English earldom it is difficult to ascertain. Jealousies and enmity still existed between them and, notwithstanding their professions of friendship, after some years of peace war again broke out. William was cited to answer the complaint of John that he had privately contracted for the marriage of one of his daughters to the Count of Boulogne, and as he did not attend John marched northward to Norham (August 1209). William then placed both his daughters in charge of John, promised the payment of a large tribute, and gave hostages for the fulfilment of his engagements. Three years later a complete peace was made between them by the surrender to John of the son and heir of the king of Scotland, to be disposed of in marriage at John's will, and by the agreement of William and his son to support Henry, the son of John, in case he should survive and succeed him. Alexander, the young Scottish prince, was then knighted by John.

14. In June 1210, John sailed with a large army for Ireland. He had raised funds for the expedition by the usual arbitrary means, the Jews especially being the victims of his exactions. The greatest disorders and lawlessness prevailed among the English settlers in Ireland; the chieftains disregarded the authority of the king and were frequently at war with each other. After receiving at Dublin the homage and tribute of many of the native princes, John reduced the rebellious barons in Meath to obedience and drove the two Lacy's out of the island. He divided into counties such portions of the country as were conquered, established English laws and the English currency, and left De Gray, bishop of Norwich, governor. After twelve weeks' absence



he returned to England, bringing with him many captives who were imprisoned and some of them starved to death at Corfe and Windsor Castles.

15. In the following year (1211) John resolved to lead an army into Wales. To get money he summoned all the heads of religious houses to London, and compelled them to supply his wants, while he again tortured and imprisoned the Jews and extorted immense sums from them. Entering Wales in July, he penetrated as far as Snowdon, ravaged the country, received the submission of Llewelyn, enforced a tribute of cattle, and took twenty-eight hostages of the best families as security for the peace of the marches. Within less than a year Llewelyn was again making inroads into England. John then had the hostages hung, and prepared for another expedition. His army was collected at Chester, but he was prevented from joining it by a report of a conspiracy of his barons against him. He retired to Nottingham Castle, disbanded his army, and deprived the suspected barons of their castles. On his return to London he hired bodies of foreign mercenaries, distrusting his own subjects and seeking thus to protect himself.

16. About a year and a half after the publication of the interdict, and therefore before the expeditions to Ireland and Wales just narrated, Innocent resolved to strike another blow which should fall on the person of the king. John had defied the terrors of the interdict, and his subjects also appear to have been less affected by it than was anticipated. An alleviation of its pressure had been granted in the permission to celebrate divine service once a week in the conventual churches. But now the king himself was to be excommunicated. The bull was issued in November 1209, and the three exiled prelates were charged to get it published in England. It was well understood that this sentence led the way to one severer still, that of deposition. It remained unpublished in England, but not unknown. The tale passed in whispers over the land, and inspired in some minds a dread of obedience to a king under the ban of the Church; but the nobles disregarded it, and even the bishops did not all fall away from their allegiance. Whatever hope might remain to John of a stronger and better position as a sovereign, he recklessly extinguished by his private vices and his public tyranny; the former openly indulged without restraint or shame, the latter

pressing with cruel impartiality on nobles, prelates, and people, who became more and more irritated and estranged from him. The story was current and credited at the time that John, desperate in the isolation and feebleness to which he had brought himself, secretly proposed to the Khalif of the Mohammedans of Spain to embrace the faith of Islam and to become his vassal, and that the Khalif rejected the offer with scorn.

## CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN. (1212—1216.)

1. ONE act yet remained to be done to exhaust the resources of the Papacy in its conflict with the refractory sovereign. The sentence of deposition from the throne was at last (1212) solemnly pronounced against John, his vassals were absolved from their fealty, his subjects from their allegiance. All Christian princes were exhorted to aid in carrying the judgment into effect, and the realm of England was offered as the prize. Philip of France, who had but a few years before stood in the same position of hostility to the Pope as John now did, and had known the worst that interdict, excommunication, and deposition could do, was now the Pope's firm friend. He eagerly entered upon the crusade, which would gratify at once his insatiable ambition and his intense hatred of John. Vast preparations were made on both sides, and some of the English barons were ready to take part with Philip. John collected a fleet at Portsmouth, and an immense army assembled on Barham Downs. The army was found to be too numerous, and after being greatly reduced, amounted still to sixty thousand men. Few, however, out of the whole number could be trusted. John therefore, no longer able to stand erect and defiant, terrified at the powers arrayed against him and at the alienation of his own subjects, cowed too by superstitious fears, began to negotiate with the Pope. His own ambassadors to Rome failed in their mission, but the Pope sent the sub-deacon Pandulph to England, with authority as legate to receive the submission of the king.

2. Pandulph was presented on the 13th May to King John at Dover, by two Knights Templars. With the subtle power of a great diplomatist he worked on the fears of the king, exaggerating the evils which were threatening him and assuring him of the friendly inclinations of the Pope. The king's courage was already failing, and a saying of one Peter called the her-

mit had contributed to depress and prepare him for any concession and humiliation. Peter had predicted that before Ascension Day, which was now but three days off, John would have ceased to reign, and for this saying he now lay in prison. John accepted the terms proposed as the price of peace with the Holy See, and signed the treaty the same day, four of his barons guaranteeing his fulfilment of the several stipulations. The principal of these were,—that Stephen Langton should be received as primate; that the banished prelates should be recalled; that monies unlawfully seized should be restored; that compensation should be made to the primate and to the banished prelates; and that sentences of outlawry should be reversed. On the fulfilment of these conditions the interdict and the excommunication were to be removed. Secret conferences occupied the next day. The submission of the king was solemnly completed in the church of the Templars on the 15th May. By an instrument signed by himself, and attested by some of his barons and bishops, John yielded up to Pope Innocent and his successors his kingdoms of England and Ireland, to be thereafter held as a fief of the Holy See by the annual rent of one thousand marks and the customary Peter's pence. He afterwards took the oath of fealty to the Pope, the same which vassals took to their lords. The morrow was Ascension Day, and John still lived and was king. Peter the hermit and his son were therefore to feel his vengeance for the false prediction. They were dragged at the tails of horses and then hung. The people nevertheless saw that John by his surrender of the crown had 'ceased to reign,' and so fulfilled the prediction.

3. England had thus been made a feudal dependency of that strange composite Power which audaciously aspired to supremacy at once over the souls of men and over all the kingdoms of the world. To its vague claim great part of Europe had already yielded, and for several generations England continued to be called in Papal bulls a vassal kingdom. The next act of Pandulph was an exercise of that sovereignty claimed over princes and states. A few days after John's submission he passed over to Boulogne, where Philip was already preparing for an invasion of England, and in the Pope's name forbade him to carry on war with John, or to invade a kingdom now forming part of the patrimony of St. Peter. The word threw Philip into a rage, and in

the unchecked utterance of his resentment he insulted the Pope, defied his authority, and flatly swore he would not go back at his bidding. But Ferrand, Count of Flanders, one of Philip's most powerful vassals, refused to take part in the invasion, and Philip was thus compelled to relinquish his scheme. He turned his army towards Flanders vowing that he would make it part of France. He reduced several towns and arrived before Ghent; but his attempt at conquest was frustrated by the intervention of the English fleet, which was at the time in the harbour of Portsmouth. The English nation was elated by this success and John resolved at once to carry the war into France, but his barons refused to follow him while he remained under excommunication, and while the prelates were still in exile. Before the end of May John issued letters of recall to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of London, Ely, Lincoln, and Hereford, and the monks of Canterbury. On the 20th of July the king met them at Winchester, where they mingled, it is said, their kisses and tears; and entering the church together, the primate pronounced the absolution, and the king swore to establish good laws, to judge justly, and to make restitution of all confiscated property. He also renewed his oath of fealty to the Pope.

4. The king was now freed from excommunication, although the interdict still lay on the realm. His strife with the Papacy was over, and he was now on the threshold of a conflict with the barons of England. He embarked once more (August) for an invasion of France, and once more his barons refused to follow him. He returned from Jersey vowing vengeance against them, and collecting an army of mercenaries marched to the North. The barons had held a meeting at St. Albans, the primate with them, and Fitz-Peter, one of the justiciaries, presiding, at which they published resolutions requiring the observance of the laws made by Henry I., and denouncing death against sheriffs, foresters, or other royal officers who should overstep their authority. At Northampton the primate remonstrated with the king, but was rudely dismissed with the injunction, 'Mind you your Church; leave me to rule the State.' Langton followed the tyrant to Nottingham and repeated his warning, adding a threat of excommunication against all, the king excepted, who should join in the war before a fair trial of the accused barons had been allowed them. John sullenly gave way and summoned the barons to meet him

on a certain day. At a second meeting of the primate and the barons held in St. Paul's, London (25th August) the charter of Henry I. was produced, and the barons, with enthusiasm, swore to be true to each other, and to conquer or die in defence of their liberties. A month later arrived a new legate, Cardinal Nicholas, whose chief business was to settle the indemnity to the exiles, and on the payment of that to raise the interdict. He travelled in great state, and earned the curses of the people by his proceedings, which were as insolent as they were iniquitous. The compensation due to the prelates for their castles and their houses, their orchards and their woods, which had been destroyed, it was difficult or even impossible to estimate with exactness. A sum of fifteen thousand marks was paid in advance and forty thousand more were promised. The legate then removed the interdict (6th December, 1213). The king renewed his public profession of subjection to the Pope, and did homage to the legate at St. Paul's. Henceforth the Pope took the side of his vassal, and strenuously upheld him against the primate and the barons.

5. Early in 1214 John invaded France, and took part in the war waged against Philip by the Emperor Otto in alliance with the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne. The allies were totally defeated by Philip at the memorable battle of Bouvines,<sup>1</sup> (27th July) at which the emperor had several narrow escapes, and his noble allies were captured. The great Earl of Salisbury (half-brother of John), who commanded the English forces, was also taken prisoner. John's scheme was made hopeless by this defeat, and having concluded with Philip a truce for five years, he returned to England in October, savage at his discomfiture and ready to go to any extremes of ferocity in the civil war which was imminent. The recent death of Fitz-Peter, his justiciary, was, to the king, a welcome removal of restraint, and he boasted, with his favourite oath, that now he was king and lord of England. His return to England was the signal for the barons to take action in the cause to which they stood pledged, and a great meeting was held (20th November) at St. Edmunds-Bury. After grave discussion they swore, each going up to the altar and laying his hands on it, that if the king withheld the rights they claimed they would renounce their fealty and make war on

<sup>1</sup> An obscure village near Tournay.

him. Stephen Langton, though not present at this meeting, was in entire sympathy with them. They parted, resolved to make formal demand of their rights of the king at the close of the Christmas festival. At Christmas John was at Worcester, but was almost alone, none of his chief vassals visiting him. Suddenly he left Worcester for London and took up his quarters in the Temple. Thither the barons followed him and on the Feast of the Epiphany (6th January, 1215) had an audience and presented their claims. After a show of proud resistance in the hope of daunting them, he shifted his ground and asked for delay. The confederates agreed to grant him till Easter, on condition that the Primate, the Bishop of Ely and the Earl of Pembroke should be sureties that he would then give them satisfaction.

6. John at once took measures which he hoped would strengthen him to fight the confederates. He garrisoned his castles and brought additional bodies of mercenaries into the kingdom. To win the clergy and detach them from the popular cause he conceded the right of free election of prelates to all chapters and conventual churches; to bind the people to him he ordered the sheriffs to tender a new oath of allegiance to all the freemen of their shires; and to get for himself the special personal security of a crusader, he took the cross and engaged to fight against the Saracens in Palestine. The king and the barons sent envoys to Rome, each side anxious to have the support of the Pope. His support was given to the king. Innocent wrote to the primate and to the barons in tones of severe censure, and took upon himself to annul the confederacy and to forbid any such to be formed in future. Censure and menace, though uttered from Rome, had no terrors for the men who had resolutely entered on this conflict. In Easter week they assembled in arms at Stamford, accompanied by two thousand knights and a large number of retainers, and marched to Brackley near Oxford, the king being then in that city. A deputation headed by Langton (27th April) received a schedule of their demands and presented it to John, who was furious and cried, 'Why do they not ask my crown too? Think they that I will be their slave?' He made other proposals which were decisively rejected; and a week or two later, still temporizing, offered to submit the matters to arbitration. The barons would have what they asked for, nothing less and nothing else.

7. The king had proclaimed himself a crusader, the barons now proclaimed themselves 'the army of God and of holy Church.' Joined by several great nobles who had hitherto remained with the king, they marched under the command of Robert Fitz-Walter to Northampton and invested the castle. Failing to take it, they passed on to Bedford, where the gates were open, and governor and townsmen eagerly welcomed them. An encouraging message reached them from London, and marching all night they entered the city in the morning. It was Sunday, the 24th of May, and the citizens were in the churches. Nobles and knights now joined them from all parts of the kingdom, and London became the head-quarters of the patriot army. The loss of his chief city dismayed the cowardly tyrant. He saw now that the strife was between him and his whole realm, and discovered that, although he bore the badge of a crusader and had the Pope for his liege lord, he could not stand against a people in arms. He must play another part, and therefore he smiled and was courteous, and declared himself ready to grant all that was asked of him. He bade the barons fix the day and the place for conference. 'Let the day,' they said, 'be the 15th of June, the place Runnymede.'<sup>1</sup> On the day appointed the meeting took place in the green meadow by the Thames, and the conferences extended over the four following days. The king did what he could no longer avoid doing,—conceded all demands and set his seal to the Great Charter in which they were embodied. John was not to be trusted, and the barons therefore exacted securities for the fulfilment of his promises. The immediate expulsion of his mercenaries was insisted on: the city of London was to be held for two months by the barons, and the Tower by the primate; and the barons were empowered to appoint twenty-five of their number guardians of the liberties established by the charter, with power in case of any violation of them by the king to make war on him. At the close of this memorable transaction the barons renewed their homage and allegiance, and the king received them again as his liege men.

8. Magna Charta is frequently spoken of as the foundation of the liberties of the English nation. This is not even an exaggeration of a truth, it is altogether a mistake. The liberties of

<sup>1</sup> Near Egham on the Thames, between Windsor and Staines.



Englishmen are of a more reverend antiquity than this Great Charter or any other written document. It is true and should not be forgotten that as religious faith has not its foundation in a written creed, so the freedom of a nation is not created by a charter. All that creed or charter can do is to define and to recognize, and even that only for a time; for the incessant movement of things makes necessary ever-new definition and recognition. The liberties of Englishmen were rudely crushed by the Norman Conquest, by feudalism, and by the arbitrary rule of bad kings who looked on the nation as if made for them. The yoke of bondage pressed more and more severely, and at last became intolerable. Then the nation rose in arms to assert its rights, and if they should be still withheld, to conquer them by force. Those rights must be defined in order to be acknowledged; and such definition and acknowledgment were made in the English Great Charter. In language singularly simple, in terse authoritative phrases, are set down, not high ideal principles of government such as those which, in recent times, have made nations mad, but plain practical remedies for great evils and abuses, the best that could be conceived by the clearest heads and sharpest intellects of Englishmen of that age. It was plain enough to be apprehended by plain men, brief enough to be remembered, and in its unpretentious pithy sentences laid down principles only half revealed at first, which grew and developed themselves in new directions, and influenced the nation through following ages. So precious a boon it was to Englishmen that they demanded its ratification of successive kings no less than thirty-eight times.

9. The first article of the Charter professes to secure the Church of England in the possession of its liberties, which however are not particularized. Many provisions are pointed against notorious abuses of feudal principles and rules, in respect to aids, reliefs, scutage, &c. No aid or scutage was in future to be levied, except on the three distinctly understood occasions, without the sanction of the great council of the nation. The Court of Common Pleas, that in which causes of a civil nature between subject and subject were tried, was no longer to be movable, following the king's person, but to be held in some certain place. No one was thereafter to be made judge, constable, sheriff or bailiff, who was not sufficiently skilled in

the law. Justice was not to be sold, refused, or deferred to any one. No freeman was to be arrested or imprisoned, or disseised of his land, except by the judgment of his peers or by the law of the land: nor should he be amerced heavily for a small fault, but in proportion to his offence, saving always to the freeholder his freehold, to the merchant his merchandize, and to the husbandman his implements of husbandry. The king's right of pre-emption was restricted, the charters of towns were confirmed, the same weights and measures were to be used in all parts of the kingdom, and foreign merchants were to enjoy freedom to come and go according to ancient custom. Some of the grievances of the forest laws were remedied; and the great vassals were to grant to their tenants the liberties which they enjoyed themselves. Such were the principal provisions of Magna Charta.

10. The king smiled as he sat with the barons and sealed the charter; but he raved like a madman after it was done. He would fight after all rather than be bound by it; would fight for revenge if not for victory. He enlisted more foreign mercenaries and sent an embassy to the Pope, who before the close of the year issued a bull excommunicating the barons and annulling the Charter. The barons distrusted the king, who sought to gain time by repeated conferences, which were all fruitless. In September the foreign troops arrived and the remorseless king let loose his dogs of war upon his countrymen. He besieged and took Rochester Castle, the barons being unable to meet him with equal forces, and then ravaged the north of England, burning the towns, razing the castles, and extorting money by torture. Alexander, king of the Scots, having obtained from the barons the cession of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, co-operated with them by an inroad into Northumberland and by besieging Norham Castle. But he retired before John's army, and was pursued as far as Edinburgh. Another portion of the mercenaries, commanded by the Earl of Salisbury, overran the eastern counties. The barons held London and seemed to be paralyzed. The Papal Bull had arrived and the primate was ordered to publish the excommunication. He refused to do so, and was suspended from his office, but this sentence had no effect. About the same time Langton's brother Simon was elected to the see of York;—the only instance in which the

two primacies have been held by two brothers. London was laid under an interdict, but London was unawed. No church was closed, no service was stopped.

11. The barons at last resorted to the desperate expedient of offering the crown of England to Louis the son of Philip of France. Louis had married a niece of John, and when the legate Gualo forbade his invasion of England, and threatened excommunication, he set up a fanciful claim on the side of his wife, Blanche of Castile. Louis and his father were both excommunicated, but Louis unheeding went on his way. At the end of May he landed at Sandwich, took Rochester Castle, and entered London, where the barons did homage to him. John had broken up his camp at Dover, and his army began to melt away. His garrisons, however, held all the great fortresses. Dover and Windsor Castles were unsuccessfully besieged, but Winchester and others were taken in June. The French prince wasted two months in inaction, and was in straits for want of supplies. The cause of John seemed once more hopeful. He besieged and took Lincoln, and thence marched southward to Lynn, where his stores and treasures were deposited. After three days he continued his march towards Wisbeach, and passing along by the Wash, a large quantity of baggage and much of his treasure were carried away by the tide. Disheartened by the loss, he fell ill at the monastery of Swineshead, but again set out and was carried on a litter to Sleaford, and the next day to Newark Castle (16th October). The end was drawing near and the king knew it. Just three months before, the Pope had died, and another reigned in his stead, Honorius III. To him John entrusted the guardianship of his son Henry, whom he named his successor. By a short will he made arrangements for the disposal of his property, and directed that his remains should be laid in the cathedral church of St. Wulfstan at Worcester. His 'ghostly confessor' attended him, raised the consecrated wafer before the dying eyes, and uttered the words of absolution. The royal sinner, after a life of falsehood, tyranny, and shame, was dismissed from this world with the peace of the Church; thus fitted, as men fancied, for his passage into the bliss of heaven. He died on the 19th October, 1216, at the age of forty-eight, after a reign of sixteen years. He left England distracted with a civil war, the fruit of his own

misrule, a large part of the kingdom subject to a foreign prince, the primate suspended from his high office, and a multitude both of barons and bishops under actual or virtual excommunication for the part they had taken in resisting his tyranny.

12. By his queen Isabella John had two sons and three daughters. Henry, the eldest, succeeded him. Richard, born in 1209, aspired to the imperial dignity and was titular king of the Romans: he was twice married and had several children, and died in 1272. Joan, eldest daughter of John, was married to Alexander, king of Scotland; Eleanor to William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, and afterwards to Simon de Montfort; and Isabella became the wife of the great emperor Frederick the Second. John had many illegitimate children, one of whom, Joan, was married to Llewelyn II., Prince of North Wales.

13. The memory of few princes has been more hated and despised than that of John; yet his misdeeds did more to weld the English people into a nation than his most patriotic efforts, if he had been capable of patriotism, could ever have done. The year of the Conqueror's death saw the English crushed under a heavier yoke than that of their Danish or Norwegian conquerors, and left them a prey to a foreign nobility as rapacious as they were cruel. The year which witnessed the death of King John saw this nobility arrayed against the king on that which was really the side of the people. Their charter introduced no absolutely new principles, but it laid down principles dimly recognized thus far, yet capable of indefinite expansion. It made no provisions for the representation of the people, but it extorted concessions of which that representation followed in the next reign as a necessary result. It left to the nobles an indefinite power of burdening the people by taxation, but it gave them this power only on the condition of their sharing the burden themselves, and this condition insured the growth and complete development of that constitution which, as it has been well said, makes taxation the shield of liberty. By obviating the necessity of violent changes, it raised a permanent barrier against revolution of that kind which in some other countries has led to the destruction of freedom, to arbitrary and capricious experiments in government, to a hatred of classes which finds vent in lavish bloodshed, to costly wars and overwhelming debt. These benefits it has secured to the English

people, and against these dangers it has guarded them chiefly, perhaps, because its authors were fighting their own battles, and failed, therefore, to see the full consequences of the reforms which they demanded in their own interests. In other words they insured to the nation that gradual and orderly growth than which no greater blessing can be conferred on any people.

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the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy.

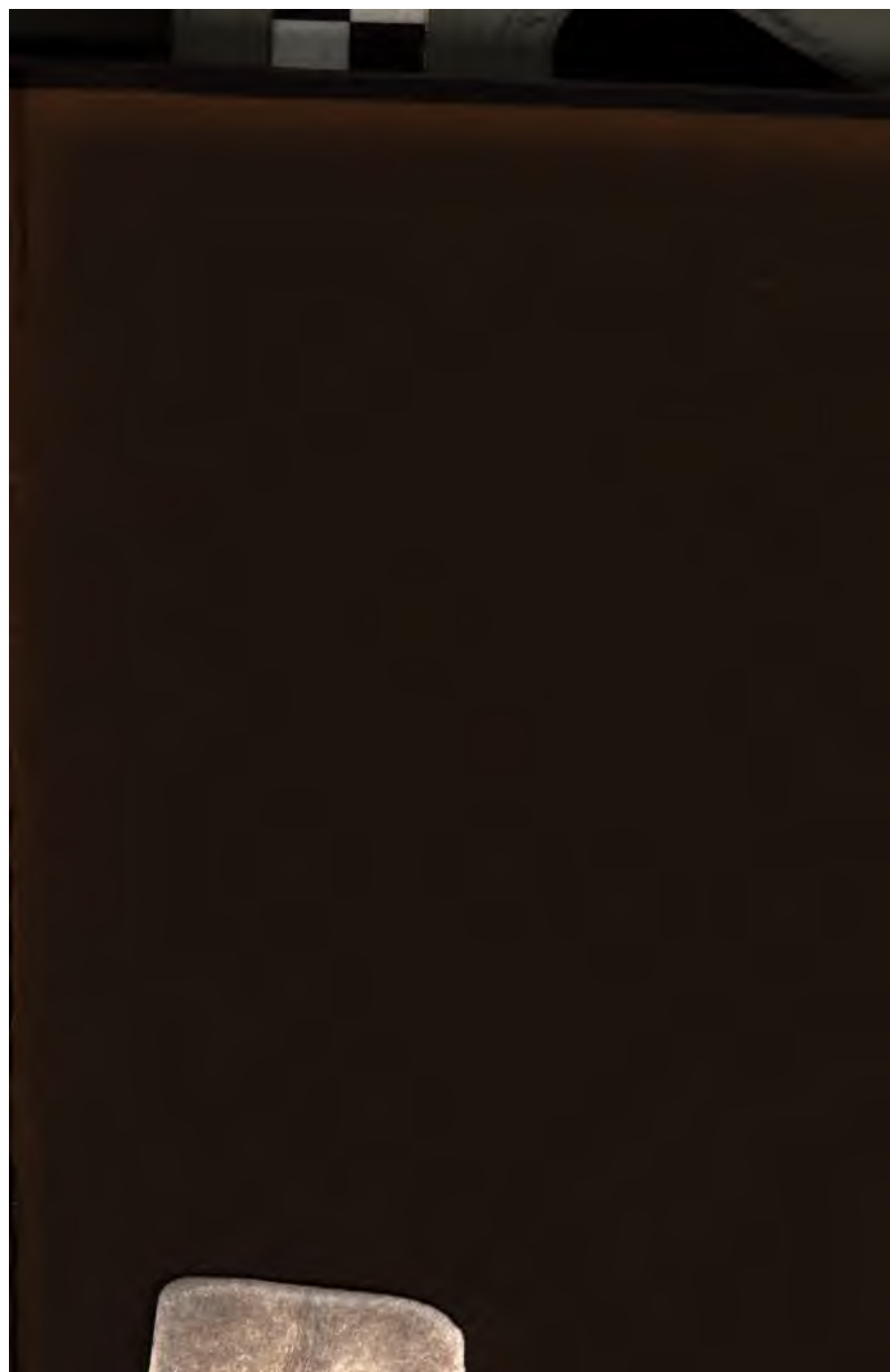
The public sector has also become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy.

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